Commentary

Volume Seventy-three, Number Four, April 1982

"Affirmative Action" Under Reagan
Chester E. Finn, Jr.

MOVIES:
The Curious Career of Costa-Gavras
Richard Grenier

FICTION:
Saul Bellow's Winter of Discontent
Ruth R. Wisse

BOOKS:
Hilton Kramer
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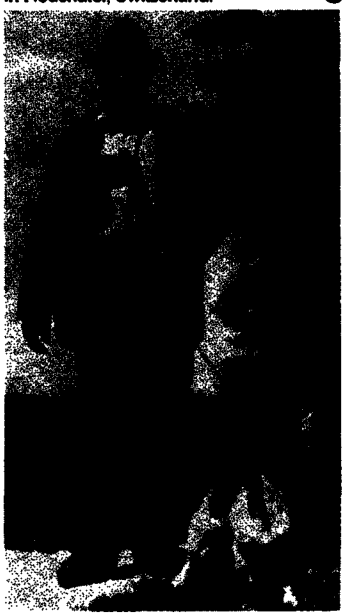
Good people

Helper of the handicapped. Ad Demmers of Holland helps handicapped children and their parents.

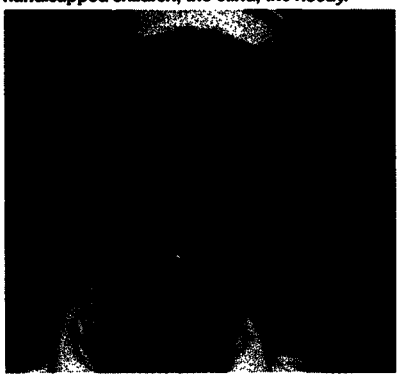
Rescuer. In Germany, Alfons Thomann works as an unpaid volunteer diver for the Bavarian Red Cross when underwater catastrophes occur.

On-the-spot Samaritan. As a volunteer for the Milwaukee Red Cross, Dale Clark brings his emergency van right to the scene to aid victims of fires and other disasters.

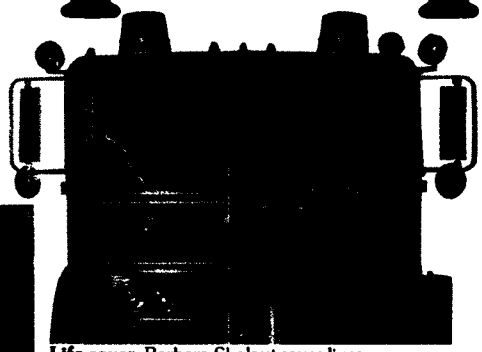
Nature preserver. Erwin Kaempf volunteers 15 to 20 hours a week as an auxiliary gamekeeper in Neuchatel, Switzerland.



Fund raiser. Irene Pitcock gives her time to the American Legion Ladies Auxiliary in Louisville raising funds through bake sales, picnics and bingo games for hospitals, handicapped children, the blind, the needy.



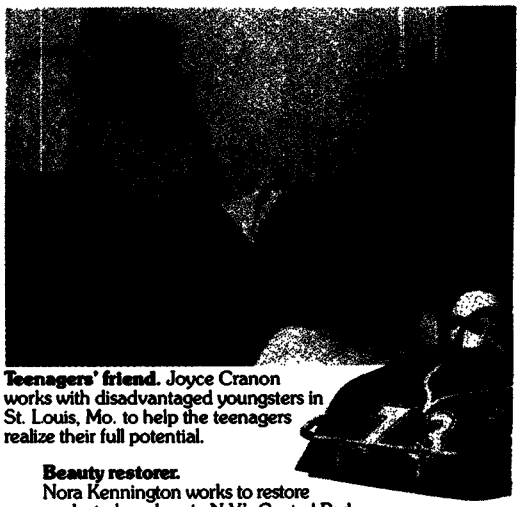
Food provider. Manuel Jaquez helped found a cooperative supermarket that provides his Dominican Republic community with quality food at reasonable prices.



Life saver. Barbara Skolaut saves lives and property for the Manchester (Virginia) Volunteer Fire Department.

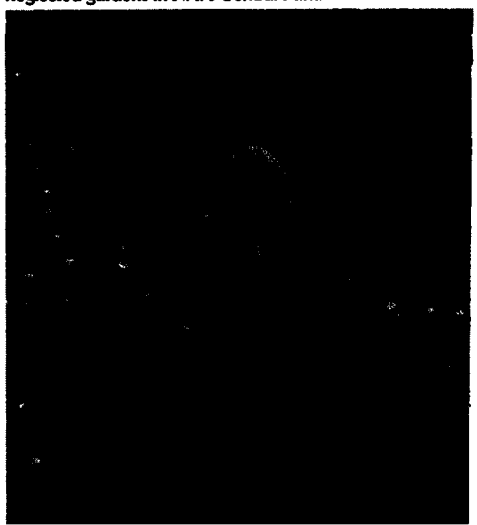
Home providers. Mike Gay and his wife Anita thought about adoption, decided they could help more children by volunteering to provide a foster home for Houston's homeless children.

Church worker. Eddie Fox joined the choir, now works seven days a week as a church services volunteer in Manhattan.



Teenagers' friend. Joyce Cranon works with disadvantaged youngsters in St. Louis, Mo. to help the teenagers realize their full potential.

Beauty restorer. Nora Kennington works to restore neglected gardens in N.Y.'s Central Park.



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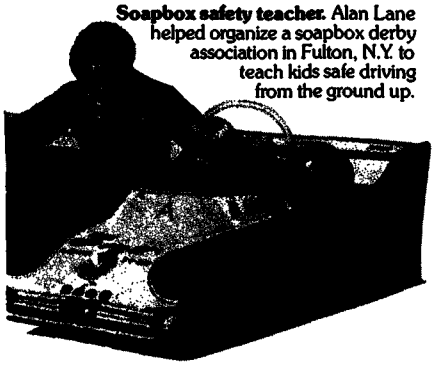
do good things.

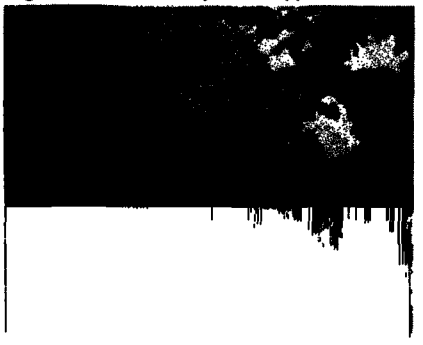
MS angels. In Melbourne, Australia, Shirley Delamott, Pat Kein and Heiltje Grieve raised over $6,000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Society with picnics, a movie and supper evening, plant and recipe book sales and raffles.

Animal protector. Last year Debbie Goik helped over 100 injured or neglected animals as a volunteer for the Humane Society in Livingston, Michigan.

Soapbox safety teacher. Alan Lane helped organize a soapbox derby association in Fulton, N.Y. to teach kids safe driving from the ground up.



Aid organizer. S.K. Patankar donates his time to the Bombay Lions Club to help raise funds and organize aid to the elderly, handicapped and blind.



The good people you see at left are (as they would be the first to tell you) just a sampling of the thousands of people within our Philip Morris family who work as volunteers in our hometowns around the world.

They look quite ordinary; and they are, in reality, quite extraordinary. They work hard for a living, and then, in their off-time, they work hard for nothing. They want to help those who are less fortunate than themselves, and in doing so, they help all of us. For the hard fact is that without these good people, our societies and our lives would be a lot less liveable.

And the delightful fact is this: Every man and woman you see here testifies that the volunteer work they do is "fun," "enjoyable," "rewarding."

They also say "It's easy to get started." Right now you can probably think of some school, library, hospital or church—or some service, cultural or community group—that would love to have you pick up the phone and offer your help for maybe an hour or two a week.

We think you will. After all, good people do good things. And you wouldn't have read this far if you weren't a pretty good person yourself.

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Commentary

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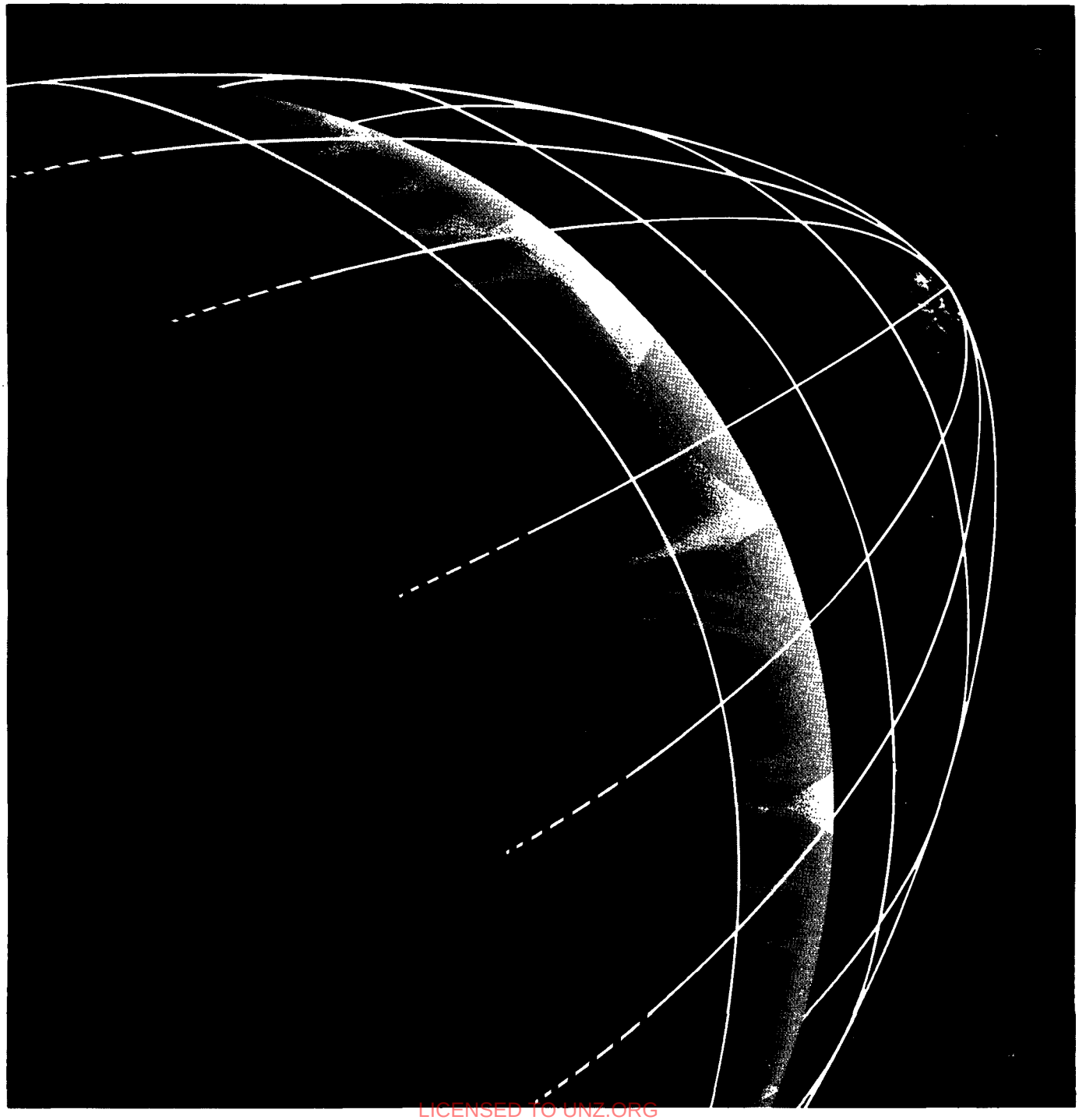

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Letters from Readers

Ulster

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

"Ulster: In the Empty House of the Stare" by Herb Greer [January] is so obviously slanted and historically biased that it would be impossible to refute every part of it without writing just as lengthy an article.

Mr. Greer writes of the 12th-century Irish nation being a "crazy quilt" of influences although having a "common Celtic language." He uses this argument to give weight to his justification of the English invasion of Ireland. How different was Ireland at this time from the other nations of Europe—which had not reached the sophisticated state of 20th-century Europe. He tells of Adrian IV (the only English pope) giving Henry II the gift of Ireland. So much for the sectarian argument. It was the hatred of the Saxon for the Gael and the wish to conquer Irish lands for England that was the impetus for the first invasion of Ireland.

The Norman invasion in the 12th century resulted in the almost complete assimilation of the Norman into the Gaelic culture of Ireland. This was a great problem for Henry II and other English kings. The notorious act of Kilkenny (1367) was but one of a long series of legislative acts designed to forestall the English invaders from taking up Irish customs and language. Of course, if Mr. Greer were correct, there would have been no need for any such law because he states that there was no Irish culture or country.

The hatred of the English for the Irish developed a new dimension in the 16th century with the coming of the Reformation. Up to this point it was Gael against Norman. Cromwell's Protestant crusade to rid the Irish of their Catholic faith helped to identify the Irish Catholic with the cause of Catholicism. But it was the basic desire of the Irish for freedom from English domination which was still the basis of their struggle.

The Ulster Plantation started in 1607 after the defeat of the Earls O'Neill and O'Donnell. The estates of the earls, which belonged in truth to the whole clan and not to the earls alone, were declared forfeit to the crown and were settled with English and Scottish subjects. Mr. Greer speaks of this episode as if a benevolent monarch allowed the impudent Irish to be helped judiciously by their betters.

The "undertakers," as they were called, who were responsible for most of the Ulster Plantation, were supposed to have the natives completely removed from their lands; in practice they accepted Irish tenants because it paid them better to do so. Religion was now identified on the one side with the wish to recover territory and on the other with the desire to hold it.

With the arrival of Cromwell and the defeat of the Irish rebels a new transplantation of the Irish was begun. The Irish were to be pushed west of the Shannon and all their land usurped. But this again was not as complete as it could have been because Irish labor was needed east of the Shannon. The outcome of this was the "Protestant Ascendancy" which lasted into the last quarter of the 19th century. This was the establishment of an imported ruling class, mainly of English and Scottish origin, professing some form of Protestantism and dominating a native Roman Catholic and still Gaelic-speaking peasantry.

Mr. Greer glosses over the Penal Laws—the whole purpose of which was the continued domination of the conquered population. The Penal Laws have some resemblance to the law of apartheid in South Africa whereby the conquering minority rules over a conquered majority.

Mr. Greer also glosses over the famine and relegates it to a "folk tradition." It is hard to believe that a documented historical fact, the famine of 1840, which it is generally accepted the English did less than nothing to correct or forestall, in which a population of ten million was reduced by half, could be treated in this manner. Perhaps a hundred years hence some budding Nazi might speak thus of the Holocaust of the Jews under the Nazis.

Mr. Greer makes light of all forms of Irish resistance during the 18th and 19th centuries because they were not made by the "right" people. The Society of United Irishmen was formed in Dublin in 1791 by a group of Anglo-Irish Protestant rebels which included Ire-

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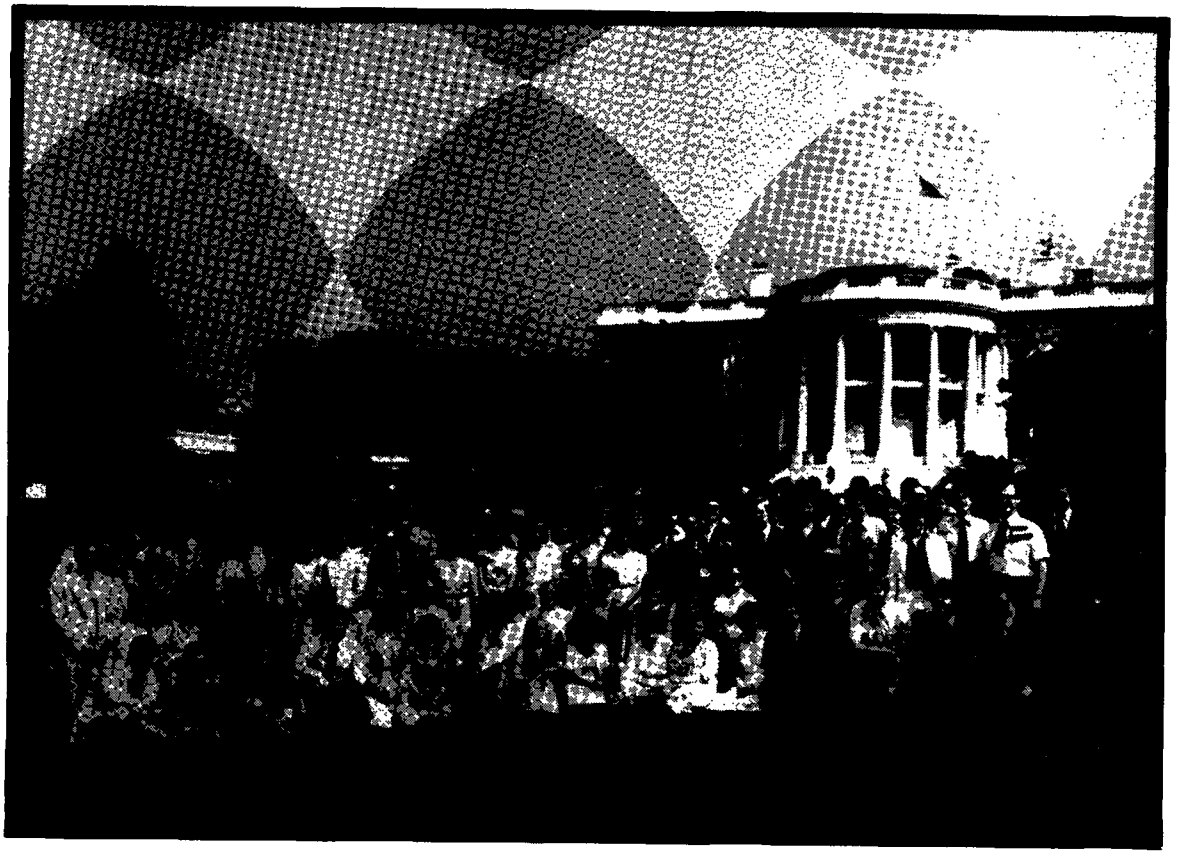

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land's greatest patriot, Wolfe Tone. Again the integration of the conqueror into the Irish society had caused a love of Ireland and a hatred of English misgovernment in Ireland. Mr. Greer does not realize that even a Protestant can love Ireland. So again, the wish of freedom from English domination was born and also the hope for the creation of an Irish republic.

For Mr. Greer to say there never was a spirit of nationalism or a country called Ireland is a cruel manipulation of historical fact. The history of Ireland is rife with attempts to expel England from its shores. Can Mr. Greer not see that this was the cause of the uprisings for 800 years?

In 1918, elections throughout the 32 counties of Ireland were held. Seventy-eight percent of the Irish people voted for parliamentary candidates who supported a unified and independent Irish state. The English ignored the wish of the people and the outbreak of the Anglo-Irish war of 1919-21 followed. In 1920 England granted Home Rule to 26 counties—gerrymandering the state of Ulster into a state with a Protestant majority and leaving three counties with distinctly Catholic majorities out of the state of Ulster.

So it continues to the present. Mr. Greer again finds fault with the new nationalism of the 1960's because it had its roots in civil rights. Again England misjudged the Irish character and grudgingly gave small relief to the Catholic minority in the north of Ireland.

Mr. Greer can speak as sarcastically as he wants of the hunger strikers who died in the early spring of 1981. But words such as "ploy" in his description of their deaths does not lessen the fact that they *did die*. In their own way they gave their lives for Ireland, and the wish for a unification of their country.

England has not yet learned the lesson heard so frequently when conflict in Ireland is mentioned: "Ireland divided will never be at peace." Until it does, the north of Ireland will be the unhappy place we have read of this past year. Until it does, men like the hunger strikers will continue to grab the headlines and the sympathy of the entire world. In the future we hope Mr. Greer's "history of Ireland" sheds its references to his hope for the "merging" of England and Ireland. Cloudy vision such as this has been the root of Ireland's trouble for the past 800 years. . . .

MARY JANE BYRNES
AILEEN RYAN
Ancient Order of Hibernians
Division 13
Bayside, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Herb Greer, after claiming Irish ancestry, proceeds to caricature, debase, and belittle Ireland and everything Irish and Celtic.

The text is abundantly laced with derisive quotation marks (I counted nine sets in the first column) and the writer has taken great pains to appear intellectual—using many archaic words like atavistic, avatar, phratric, revanchist, etc. throughout the article. He starts his lesson on Irish history in the centuries before Christ, but one searches in vain for any mention of the accomplishments of the Celts of this period who were Europe's founders and gave Europe its first civilization north of the Alps. Nor is there any mention of Ireland's contribution of teachers and scholars during Europe's Dark Ages from the 6th to the 12th centuries.

One would think that a writer who claims Irish ancestry would take some pride in Irish monasticism which flourished during this period. Irish monks and teachers built places of learning in Iona and Lindisfarne in Scotland, then on the continent at Cologne, Erfurt, Nuernberg, Regensburg, Modra, Luxeuil, St. Gall, Bobbia, and Kiev.

Mr. Greer's callous explanation of the great famine of 1845-48, in which one-fifth of the population died horrible deaths while the English shipped most of the livestock and produce to England, is that English actions were excusable because they were in keeping with the customs of the times!

The main reason for Nationalist discontent in Ireland is Britain's denial of majority rule. The last time all Ireland, North and South, voted in a general election (December 1918) there was a three-to-one victory for the candidates pledged to a free, sovereign, and independent Ireland. But Britain, which had inveigled America into "the war for the freedom of small nations," denied majority rule for Ireland and set up the artificial statelet of "Northern Ireland" which has no historic or natural geographic boundaries but only artificial boundaries drawn solely to insure perpetual domination by the empire loyalists. This resulted in privilege for the loyalists and second-class citizenship for all others. Mr. Greer conveniently omits mention of this stolen election in his history lesson.

Referring to the massacre of thirteen civilians at a civil-rights rally in Derry on January 30, 1972, he not only repeats Lord Widgery's whitewash but goes him one better. According to Mr. Greer: "The IRA maneuvered civilians between themselves and troops, then opened fire. Seven civilians and six IRA men were killed by return fire. Surviving terrorists removed the weapons of the dead IRA men and withdrew, leaving apparently innocent 'civilian' bodies."

For the IRA to fire through the crowd at armed troops would not only be sheer madness (none of the soldiers received as much as a flesh wound), but a veritable impossibility. It boggles the mind how "surviving terrorists" could remove the weapons of the dead IRA men and withdraw while face to face in the street with point-blank fire from the paratroop regiment.

What really happened was sheer unadulterated murder. An eyewitness, Fulvio Grimaldi, a photojournalist for the Italian *Septe Giorni*, said: "There hadn't been one shot fired at [the British troops], there hadn't been one petrol or nail bomb thrown at them. They just jumped out and with unbelievable, murderous fury shot into the fleeing crowd."

Jack Lynch, Ireland's Prime Minister, said that the government of the Republic was satisfied that British troops had fired recklessly at unarmed civilians. Isaac Cohen, Chief Rabbi of Ireland, said: "The people of Ireland on both sides of the border are united today in a common expression of horror at the latest tragic killings in Derry. Men and women of all faiths are shocked by the horrifying escalation of bloodshed in Ireland, casting a sad cloud of gloom over those many homes which are today filled with sorrow for their beloved sons, and where anxious brothers and sisters nurse the wounds of those who dared to protest in the name of freedom."

The worldwide outcry of indignation and horror forced the British government to appoint a tribunal headed by Chief Justice Lord Widgery, a former army officer, to investigate. Many eyewitnesses on learning that the investigation was

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being conducted by some of the army's own, simply stayed away. The Widgery tribunal, to no one's surprise, concluded that there had been no breakdown of discipline, although the firing of some of the soldiers "bordered on the reckless." The British army claimed that eight of the dead were on the wanted list. This statement was later scaled down to six wanted men, then to three wanted men—until it was completely withdrawn. The British government subsequently exonerated all the victims from involvement in the so-called provocation. . . .

So much for the truth and veracity of Mr. Greer's account of Bloody Sunday and the millennium of history leading up to it. It does not require too much reflection to convince any thoughtful person that Herb Greer is a dedicated empire loyalist who uses his claim to Irish ancestry as a smoke screen. . . .

THOMAS GARVEY
Ancient Order of Hibernians
Four Province Division
Neptune, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Herb Greer expresses blatantly anti-Irish sentiments. Not only does his article support British racism, it is historically untrue. For example, Mr. Greer says: "Before the 1921 partition of Ireland, the province of Ulster contained nine counties." The province of Ulster *still* contains nine counties even though six were illegally annexed by England without the consent of the Irish people.

Mr. Greer speaks of terrorism and terrorists in the North of Ireland . . . [but] he does not mention the real terrorists, namely, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, the Ulster Defense Force, Paisley's armed gangs, or the English army. Nor does he mention H-Block, the *concentration camp* where Irish men are tortured and beaten after being "convicted" in a Diplock court without jury or due process of law. Ireland doesn't need any more British propaganda articles like Mr. Greer's. . . .

CATHERINE MCGILLICUDDY
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Herb Greer's analysis of the Irish "Troubles" concludes with the assertion that ". . . the need to survive in a fiercely competitive world must inevitably push together the interests of the British and the Irish." Quite the contrary, it is precisely this competitive economic arena which is pushing Britain and Ireland apart!

Since its 1973 entry into the European Economic Community, the Republic of Ireland has prudently loosened many of its remaining economic ties with Britain. This is clearly borne out in the trade statistics of both the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic, and is exemplified by the 1979 severing of the parity relationship between the British and Irish currencies which had existed for nearly two hundred years. Closer ties with Britain in a harsh economic era would mean that Ireland would be even more prone to the most dreaded of European ailments, the "British disease." (The "British disease" is a peculiar combination of low productivity, a negative rate of capital investment, severe labor turmoil, and bloody-mindedness.)

The modern Irish Republic has followed a strategy which aggressively pursues industrial and economic development, and its policies have achieved a remarkable degree of success. The Irish Republic has become a very forward-looking nation. In "a fiercely competitive world" advocating closer ties to . . . the Britain of today is both unwise and a prescription for a return to "the stultified agricultural backwater" which Southern Ireland *once* was.

DANIEL L. QUINN
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Herb Greer has an interesting and I think generally accurate view of the genesis of the current imbroglio in Northern Ireland. Especially perceptive are his remarks on the essential "Britishness" of all of Ireland, North and South. Like it or not, Ireland is indeed John Bull's Other Island. However, I found one of his constant themes rather disturbing. Mr. Greer makes the point over and over again that there is some peculiar relationship between National Socialism and Irish nationalism. Thus, Patrick Pearse was a "proto-fascist"; Sir Roger Casement was attempting to form "a kind of Waffen-SS" among Irish POW's in Germany in 1915-16; the late hunger-striker Bobby Sands, MP, acted in a manner similar to another " 'sincere' martyr," Horst Wessel. Prime Minister De Valera is portrayed as a politician who may have "allowed the Germans to use the Irish coast as a haven for submarine action against Allied shipping," who definitely permitted "the German representative in Dublin to send weather reports to the Luftwaffe" and hence aided the bombing campaign against Britain, and who struggled (along with Joseph P. Kennedy) to do "what he could to keep the United States out of the war."

To examine these charges, I will take them point by point.

1. Patrick Pearse did indeed write all sorts of nonsense on the uplifting character of war, on the unique glories of the Celts, and on the redemptive qualities of blood sacrifices. I suppose, in a way, such maunderings are "proto-fascist," though endemic to Western culture in the early 20th century. It was quite normal among poets, politicians, and scholars (some of whom later were prominent in the fight against *real* fascism) in America, Russia, France, Britain, Germany, and elsewhere to exalt racial and warlike virtues. To condemn Pearse is, rightfully perhaps, to condemn almost an entire culture.

2. To accuse Sir Roger Casement, perhaps the foremost opponent of racism against blacks in early 20th-century Europe, of forming a "kind of Waffen-SS" is a slur on the memory of a compassionate, if foolish, man.

3. One need not sympathize with Sands or his movement to see little comparison between a man who dies a lingering and horrible death by the avoidance of food—for his principles—and the National Socialist brownshirt, Horst Wessel, who was killed in a squalid domestic quarrel initiated by his landlady.

4. Much to the chagrin of Churchill, Roosevelt, their foreign offices, and press opinion in London and New York, Southern Ireland was neutral in World War II. Switzerland was also neutral. So was the United States until rather late in the game. And so would the United States have presumably remained save for an opportune attack (by Japan) and a declaration of war (by Germany). De Valera certainly never allowed German submarines the use of the Irish coast. No serious historian accepts the truth of such a charge and even Mr. Greer—though he repeats that old canard—wonders as to its re-

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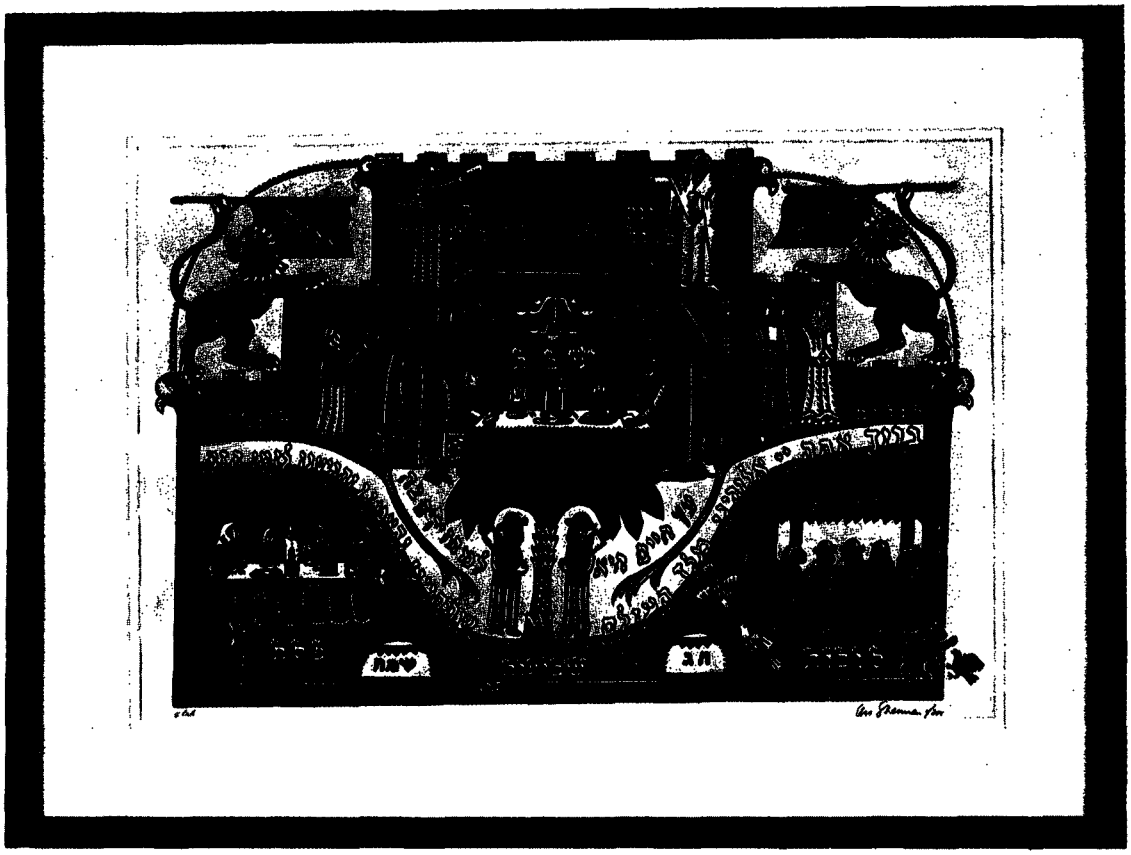

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by

Ori Sherman

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In the bottom left corner is a family celebrating *Pesach* by partaking of the Seder. At bottom right, another family sits in the traditional booth of boughs and greenery, observing the festival of *Sukkot*. At upper left, a man blows a ram's horn to usher in the New Year, *Rosh Hashana*. And opposite, at right, a man garbed in white beats his breast and asks forgiveness on the great fast of *Yom Kippur*.

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liability. When De Valera discovered the manner in which the German legation in Dublin was using its radio transmitter, he ordered it lodged in a bank. Is there any real evidence that DeValera "did what he could to keep the United States out of the war"? De Valera himself strenuously denied that he had any dealings with FDR's political or isolationist opposition. The Prime Minister certainly did offer his personal condolences to the German minister in Dublin on the death of Hitler. He thought it was the honorable thing to do under the circumstances, given Ireland's neutrality. In this he may have been wrong or insensitive, but it certainly did not reflect any deep-seated pro-German leanings. When the Germans in 1940, flushed with seeming victory, more-or-less offered to guarantee an end to partition, De Valera politely declined to pursue the matter. He was always neutral and always diplomatically correct.

JAMES J. SACK
University of Illinois at
Chicago Circle
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The year is 1982. In this mythical world, the Nazis have won World War II. An American publication documenting that period writes: "Like many an atrocity in [Jewish] mythology, this charge of genocide has a *prima facie* plausibility; but it will not stand serious examination." The writer in the publication goes on to justify the reasoning of the time: "It would have required a vast aid operation of late 20th-century proportions—something unimaginable at the time, without a ready and deep-seated belief that these large numbers of poor, useless as a labor force, were worth a gigantic effort and expense, just because they were human beings. . . . To portray the calamity as cold-blooded murder is exciting melodrama but bad history.". . .

Let us shift back into the real world of 1982, in which the above passages were written not about the Jews, but by Herb Greer about the Irish of the mid-19th century. . . .

Historical records show that during the Potato Genocide of the 1840's, enough agricultural produce was shipped from Ireland to England to have fed the entire Irish population (that "useless labor force") two times over. During that time period, the potato crops failed in the rest of Europe, but no one perished in any of the other countries. Only in Ireland was an attempt made to starve the Irish out of existence, something that Oliver Cromwell, a few centuries before, had tried and partially succeeded in doing. . . . Only off the coast of Ireland were food ships sent by the Sultan of Turkey to the starving populace turned back by England.

If anyone still has a question in his mind about the "civilized English" and their genocidal policies, look to Tasmania. During the same 19th century, England succeeded in exterminating the entire Tasmanian population. Bounties were put on their heads, and some were sold for dog food. At the last moment, England tried to save the remaining few, knowing that those few were doomed.

Herb Greer is an anti-Celtic. In his piece, not one kind word is said about the Irish, their history, culture, or civilization. Mr. Greer very subtly makes fun of the "800-year struggle of the Irish nation." Would he do likewise about the "2,000-year struggle of the Jewish nation"? He mocks the Irish freedom fighters of today. Yet . . . Mr. Greer discreetly chooses not to mention that it was the Irish Republican Army who, in the late 1940's, trained and fought alongside many Jewish freedom fighters in English-occupied Palestine.

Mr. Greer doesn't explain how Bobby Sands was elected to the British Parliament with 10,000 more votes than Margaret Thatcher received in her most recent election. Or why more than 100,000 people attended the funeral of Mr. Sands. Or why Andrei Sakharov, the Russian political dissident, is to be congratulated for staging a hunger strike, but Bobby Sands, the Irish political dissident, is to be condemned.

However, Mr. Greer, unwittingly in his anti-Celtic version of Irish history, does put the lie to the current English propaganda that the war in Northern Ireland is a "sectarian war." Mr. Greer first writes about "English and Scottish settlers"; then miraculously, they are transformed into the "Protestant settlers" and the "native Irish" suddenly become the "Catholic Irish."

English colonialism is not dead. The use of English torture against Irish political dissidents, as attested to by Amnesty International, the European Commission on Human Rights, and the International League for Human Rights, is still with us. The use of plastic bullets by the British army and the Royal Ulster Constabulary to murder and maim innocent Irish men, women, and children is prevalent. Anti-Celticism, apparently, is alive and thriving. . . .

RAYMOND QUINN
American Irish Unity Committee
New York City

HERB GREER writes:

Mary Jane Byrnes, Aileen Ryan, Thomas Garvey, and Catherine McGillicuddy illustrate perfectly the typical Irish-American view which I mentioned in my piece. Their fury over what they say I wrote would be better directed at what I really did write. That it is not so directed may be explained by the fact that most of their complaints and assertions are adequately refuted in the original piece. But I will comment on a few of their more obvious errors and distortions.

The arrival of the Normans in Ireland had nothing to do with the "hatred of the Saxon for the Gael," but a great deal to do with the hatred of Gael for Gael. Dermot MacMurrough's purely Irish quarrel inspired his invitation to the Normans to come and help settle it.

Mr. Garvey is mistaken about the election of 1918. Sinn Fein had a popular vote of 485,105. The anti-Republican vote, including Nationalists and Unionists, was 557,435. This majority foreshadowed popular Irish acceptance of a treaty which retained important ties with the British Crown. It also adumbrated the later civil war and the Republican defeat. As I pointed out, the extreme Republican groups so noisily supported by Mr. Garvey and his ilk have never been really popular in Ireland and are still intensely disliked by most genuine Irish (as opposed to American Irish) both in the North and South, Catholics included. If any proof of this were needed beyond the historical record, it was on show in the last Irish general election, when all the extremist candidates were electorally wiped out.

Fulvio Grimaldi's hysterical rhetoric is no more an accurate description of what happened on Bloody Sunday (1972) than is Mr. Garvey's. The IRA were not face to face with

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THE TERRIBLE COST OF UNION VIOLENCE

Charles Eaves

Larry Crawford had heard the insults, the racial slurs and the death threats before as he crossed the picket line. After all, the strike at Virginia Lime Co. near Pearisburg, Va. had been going on for months. But the strikers were growing more vicious in their language every day. And were those insults, slurs and threats really "just" words?

The verbal assaults on Larry were taking their toll. He couldn't sleep at night. He was nervous, irritable and often depressed. Nothing seemed to improve his appetite or make his crushing headaches go away. Psychiatrists call it "traumatic stress reaction." Men at war call it "combat fatigue."

And then on a cold February day, one of Larry's non-striking co-workers learned what it was like to be shot at. A shotgun blast tore into his car. Fortunately, no one was hurt.

But Larry Crawford realized the same thing could happen to him, to his wife and child. And all because local members of the United Steel Workers refused to accept Larry's right, his need, to work.

With the help of the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, Larry and eight co-workers, including Charles Eaves and Raleigh Newby, fought back. Within the law. The strikers were hauled into court and held accountable for conduct later called "vile and degrading" by the judge.

Justice was served in Giles County Circuit Court. Larry and his eight co-workers received a judgement of $99,000 in damages for physical and verbal attacks suffered during the 18-month strike.

But the strikers are expected to appeal their case, which is likely to go all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Compulsory union dues will pay for their lawyers. High-powered research staffs will seek out every legal loophole to postpone the day when Larry Crawford, Charles Eaves, Raleigh Newby and their families can sleep soundly at night.

The National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation is helping everyone it can. Currently, some 250 cases involving protection from union violence, illegal union political spending, academic and political freedom and other basic employee rights are being prepared or brought before courts across the nation.

Raleigh Newby

For information on how you can help Larry Crawford and his family, write us. We'd like to hear from you today. And so would the Crawford family.

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the soldiers, but crouched behind a barricade, and fired from there, and from apartments overlooking the scene. Thus their withdrawal is hardly "mind-boggling." For Republican terrorists to fire through a civilian crowd is not at all surprising. One of their standard tactics in Ulster is to use civilians (including young children) as a screen when ambushing soldiers and policemen. During the recent bombings in London, the civilian victims—an Irish Catholic boy and an old woman—were in full view of the terrorist who detonated the bomb which killed them. Shortly after that the same "active-service unit" planted a booby-trapped toy in the street near a London school. So much for the Bold Fenian Men.

Prisoners in the Maze have a regime that is one of the easiest and most comfortable in the United Kingdom, and among the best in Europe. It is so good that other British prisoners have complained bitterly over the favor shown to convicted terrorists. The foul conditions featured in "H-Block" propaganda were created by the terrorists themselves precisely for the purpose of that propaganda. Their complaints are rather like the plea of the man who murdered his mother and father and then demanded mercy on the ground that he was an orphan. The European Court of Human Rights, among others, has rejected the allegations of torture, etc. So do I.

Daniel L. Quinn's remarks about British and Irish interests are of limited value. My comments were made on a scale of some eight centuries. He is talking of a period which spans approximately a decade. He must be aware that since loosening its technical economic ties with the United Kingdom, Ireland has suffered a major recession —one of the most prominent issues in the recent Irish general election. That may or may not prove something about the UK connection. What it definitely disproves is Mr. Quinn's claim of a "remarkable degree of success." Of course, the UK remains one of Ireland's most important trading partners—and common membership in the EEC is a tie between the two countries, not a mark of division.

My thanks to James J. Sack for his attempt to discuss my piece with a modicum of civility. He does well to be disturbed about the relationship between the IRA's nationalism and Nazism. This happens to be a matter of record. He will find a fairly thorough account of it in Tim Pat Coogan's book, *The IRA*.

To answer his points:

1. I agree that Patrick Pearse uttered "all sorts of nonsense," etc. The nub of the matter is that he and his colleagues took this nonsense absolutely seriously and acted on it with horrifying results. That the nonsense is "endemic to Western culture" is neither here nor there. So is opposition to it. Many people, including Irishmen, have died on behalf of that opposition. So my condemnation of Pearse hardly extends to "an entire culture."

2. I did not accuse Roger Casement of racism. The Freikorps or Irish Brigade which he wished to form with Irish prisoners of war was a close cognate to the World War II Waffen SS which recruited foreign nationals into special units to fight for the Third Reich. If the facts—and they are facts—are a slur on Casement's memory, so be it.

3. I doubt that Mr. Sack can deny the sincerity of Horst Wessel's Nazism or his status as a martyr. He passes over my closer parallel of Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof, who also committed suicide in prison and were used for the same sort of propaganda that attended the deaths of Bobby Sands and his friends. I do not think the sincerity or manner of a suicide proves much in itself except in terms of propaganda value. Certainly neither makes a bad cause any better, or excuses terrorist crimes. (Hitler was utterly sincere.) Nor can either deodorize the stench of blood; and there was plenty of that on the hunger strikers' hands.

4. My point about De Valera was not that he was a Nazi sympathizer, though he contrived to make himself look like one in the eyes of many responsible people. It was that his political actions widened the gulf between Eire and Ulster. I note that Mr. Sack avoids the incident of De Valera's protest over American troops in Ulster as an "infringement of Irish sovereignty," with the coincidental failure to remonstrate with the Germans over their heavy bombing of Belfast. Even on his own terms that was hardly a demonstration of neutrality. It was not diplomatically "correct," either. His impounding of a radio transmitter—after great (unprotested) damage had been done—can as easily be explained by fear of Allied intervention as by any attachment to principled neutrality. De Valera's pro-German leanings were not "deep-seated." They were right up front. He was one of those who had acclaimed the Germans as allies—*glorious* allies—in World War I. In the circumstances, his subsequent conversion to neutrality appeared rather disingenuous. So did his denial of connections with isolationist circles in the United States. The American State Department's accusation of a "pro-Axis" neutrality was clearly not made out of chagrin but from a fairly shrewd assessment of fact.

As to Raymond Quinn's somewhat distasteful equation of the 19th-century famines with the 20th-century Holocaust: the suggestion that a great, horrible, but natural disaster was in any way like the planned and deliberate slaughter of some 6 million human beings with technology specially created for the purpose is fatuous nonsense. But this brings me back to the matter of a certain fascist strain in Irish Republicanism. It goes further than a fleeting alliance between Nazis and the IRA in World War II. The points of comparison today are many: the compulsive, almost mystical addiction to random violence, a virulent irredentism based on historical and racial myth (there was no Ancient Irish nation, and there is no Celtic race in modern Ireland—or in America, either); the dehumanizing of opponents; the insistent and stubborn use of lies; the use of mutilation in "punishing" dissenters; the aim of a one-party state; the use of conspiracy and intimidation; the exploitation of Jacobin rhetoric about "liberation" and "human rights" while violently and deliberately flouting such rights—there are many more parallels. Those who wish to explore the question will find other criteria in *The Fascist Persuasion in Radical Politics* by A. J. Gregor.

None of these remarks makes me "anti-Irish." On the contrary, I am very pro-Irish. What I oppose is a vicious armed cabal and its foreign backers, who together mean to destroy Ireland's system of government and install another in its place, using the usual fascist means of ruthless violence, insurrection, and the most brutal intimidation.

Finally, I do not just "claim" Irish ancestry. I have it, plus documented descent from a branch of

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the same family that produced Theobald Wolfe Tone. I doubt that the famous Irish apostle of freedom would care much more than I do for the active and vicarious terrorists who now brandish his name.

Painters

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

We all know time's law of disparagement: whoever has been up in our estimation for a certain time, will—after a certain time—have to come tumbling down. I suppose there is no escaping this law, and no use protesting that it should not apply to Meyer Schapiro since it applies to everyone else.

So it is not because I would like to defend an old friend from the rigor of time's law that I feel obliged to protest the manner, at once crude and cavalier, with which William Barrett has discussed Schapiro in "The Painters' Club" [January]. Let me here recall Mr. Barrett's remarks:

> I knew that Clem [Greenberg] had a primary and direct response to visual works of art that most intellectuals and some art critics do not enjoy. The two other art experts in our immediate circle were Harold Rosenberg and Meyer Schapiro, and I doubt that they had the capacity for visual immediacy that Greenberg did. I once went to the Museum of Modern Art with Meyer Schapiro, an erudite and brilliant scholar in the history of art, and the experience was exhilarating; but there came a moment when I could not help thinking: if only the man would stop talking for a bit, if only that spellbinding flow of words would cease, and some painting or other would stop him in his tracks and make him go silent. I had the feeling that the work of art was noticed only as a springboard to his discourse, a mere stimulus to set the verbal machinery going. But Clement Greenberg could be stopped in his tracks by the sheer visual impact of a painting, and let it work on him in silence. . . .

The clear implication here is that Meyer Schapiro could *not* be "stopped in his tracks" by the impact of a painting and "let it work on him in silence." From this comes Mr. Barrett's conclusion that Schapiro lacked what Greenberg eminently has, namely, "visual immediacy." But what I should like to be informed about is this: how does William Barrett know that Meyer Schapiro *never* looks at a painting with enough interest to be silenced by it? Mr. Barrett says he went *once* to the Museum of Modern Art with Schapiro, and on this *one* occasion Schapiro talked brilliantly about the paintings they both looked at. Now these were no doubt paintings that Schapiro had seen many times before, paintings which, so to speak, he knew by heart. It is of course difficult to have an experience of visual immediacy when you are looking at paintings you have already carefully analyzed, just as it is difficult to have a feeling of verbal immediacy about even the greatest lines of verse if one has treasured them in memory. Mr. Barrett's cavalier misjudgment of Schapiro in this regard reminds me of a misjudgment by the late Harold Clurman of a French audience at the Comédie Française. Clurman of course made his misjudgment the very point of his story. He was watching a performance of Molière's *Le Malade Imaginaire*, a play he had never before seen done by French actors. As he told me, he thought the play the funniest he had ever seen, and what mystified him was that the audience hardly laughed. At the curtain, Clurman asked a Parisian sitting next to him who had not laughed once: "Didn't you think the play amusing?" "It's a masterpiece of humor," the man replied. "Then why didn't you laugh?" Clurman asked. "And why didn't others laugh?" "This is a French audience," the Parisian replied. "We know the play by heart."

That Schapiro may often have looked at paintings in silent meditation is clear to me from the fact that he has so often been able to point to elements in pictures which other art historians and critics have not seen at all. Thus John Russell, the art critic for the New York *Times*, in reviewing Schapiro's essays on modern art, singled out for particular praise Schapiro's searching glance, his *visual* grasp of the art he has studied. Now I do not want to suggest any lesser opinion of Clement Greenberg as an art critic than William Barrett has expressed. I have not visited museums with Greenberg and so I cannot say whether or not he has to any great degree what Mr. Barrett calls "visual immediacy." Perhaps he is

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just as gifted in this regard as Mr. Barrett surmises. I do know this, however: the art criticism which has made Greenberg famous and of which, by the way, Schapiro has spoken in the most generous terms to me, is most notable for the boldness of its value judgments and much less so for the perception of elements in painting invisible to others until the critic's text.

LIONEL ABEL

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

William Barrett's memoir, "The Painters' Club," proves him to be a fine raconteur, but it also proves him to be a man writing about artists and art he does not quite understand. Mr. Barrett's continual depiction of the cosmopolitan, academy-educated Willem de Kooning as "childlike," his fondness for quoting de Kooning's utterance of the mild expletive, "Gee" (as if the mark of a true literary intellectual is total avoidance of such a word), and his general, albeit disguised, air of condescension toward the artists about whom he writes, compel such a conclusion. Mr. Barrett's tale of his attempt to give a talk—presumably an intellectual one—to the Club, including his observation that artists are somehow better off staying away from abstract ideas (allegedly because their minds are too "concrete," whatever that may mean), underlines his inability to see serious artists through anything but the same old romantic haze of *Moulin Rouge, Lust for Life, The Agony and the Ecstasy, et al.* Forgotten once again is the artist's full, vital way of knowing the world and life, and in its place once again is the picture of the artist as a tipsy, lovable *naïf*.

This picture, in turn, leads Mr. Barrett into his heavy-handed attack on formalist theories, as if they were intoxicants in the hands of junior-high-school students. At their worst, such theories are indeed, in almost narcissistic fashion, more fascinated by their own power than the work of art in question. But even at less than their best, formalist theories help one grasp that part of art which is *art*, namely, that part which is beyond mere illustration. Mr. Barrett, on the other hand, believes at bottom in illustration. He tells us, for instance, that de Kooning was so fascinated by a man on horseback painted by Velázquez that he said, "Gee, I'd like to do something like that," and went off to spend several fruitless days trying to draw men on horseback. "Notice, however," Mr. Barrett writes, "that it was the arrogant beauty of a man on horseback and not the pattern of light and shadow that had gripped his imagination." How, I ask, do we "notice" this? Certainly not from anything Mr. Barrett reports de Kooning to have said. On the contrary, an artist's imagination is far more likely to be lured into another artist's "pattern of light and shadow" than into the mere subject matter to which it was attached. The "something like that" to which de Kooning referred was probably the *Velázquez* in Velázquez rather than a mere equestrian picture.

Mr. Barrett's implication is that de Kooning has lived, unfortunately and unknowingly, in a time in which all he has left to him is his abstraction; were he to have lived in Velázquez's time he would, Mr. Barrett insinuates, have been free to pursue what is really art, that is, figuration. Hidden beneath Mr. Barrett's seemingly chummy prose is an *a priori* dislike of abstraction and the belief that such painting is a pastime appropriate for the grown children of the Club. Hidden beneath de Kooning's charming Dutch accent, however, is a profound, ambitious, fully adult soul deliberately, if intuitively, probing the realm of abstract painting.

LAURIE FENDRICH

Durham, North Carolina

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I wish I had known William Barrett at the time of the Eighth Street Club, about which he writes with so much perception.

. . . I too have many memories of the Club: that shabby old building; the creaking floor of the clubroom . . .; the panel discussions—I can remember particularly one evening when John Ferren, Herbert Ferber, John Cage, and the ill-fated poet Frank O'Hara spoke, and my late husband, Ary Stillman, moderated. . . .

In the mid-40's, when Stillman broke away from traditional painting, it was not to replace it with the Cubist tradition or with a purely formalist conception. With him, as with so many creative persons of the time, the break was a reaction to the enormity and horror of World War II; it meant forsaking a world in which they had grown up but which had now collapsed. Artists like Adolph Gottlieb and Mark Rothko used an intellectual approach in seeking a method of expression that would fit with the new world. Stillman, on the other hand, felt he had to approach the problem intuitively, and he decided to delve into his subconscious and bring forth whatever he had accumulated in his years of travel and creativity, fragments of visual and emotional impressions, from many lands and many cultures. Thus, kind as Clement Greenberg was, he could not fully approve of Stillman's type of nonrepresentational painting. For, as Alfred Werner said of Stillman's work, no matter how nonrepresentational it might be, one felt that "man had been there."

That, in a nutshell, is what I feel is lacking in so much contemporary painting. It is what William Barrett feels too, I gather from his article. . . . Ary Stillman's method of working from memories stored in the subconscious resulted, as Mr. Barrett would put it, in "the past coming to life again in another form in the present." This is what I hope will evolve as present-day artists contemplate their world.

FRANCES STILLMAN

Houston, Texas

WILLIAM BARRETT writes:

Lionel Abel seems to me too solemn and contentious. I related an incident (a trip to a museum); the far-reaching implications he builds around it are his own construction.

Laurie Fendrich is mistaken: childlike is not childish. Childlike refers to that marvelous freshness of vision granted to some artists, and is not inconsistent with depth or profundity, quite the contrary. Also, I am not in the least opposed to abstract art, but to the view that it is the *only* valid art for our time, and the *only* valid point of view for looking at works of art.

Political Pilgrims

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to make a few brief comments on Leonard Schapiro's fair and informative review of my book, *Political Pilgrims* [Books in Review, December 1981].

I found his observation that I am not critical enough of some of the "pilgrims" particularly thought-provoking. Along these lines he writes that I make no allowance

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for "sheer dishonesty." It is true that on the whole I view the "pilgrims" as deluded idealists rather than willful propagandists. Mr. Schapiro may be right that in some cases—he mentions Hewlett Johnson—they knew better. The problem is compounded by the fact that even those who knew better, or more, about the darker sides of these regimes justified to themselves their silence (or distortion) by some higher purpose—thus a perverted idealism still colored their attitudes. Their selective reporting was rationalized by their belief in the greater evils present in their own society or by the threat of Nazism (in the Soviet case), or more recently perhaps, by the fear of nuclear war. Perhaps "sheer dishonesty" is hard to find as intellectuals (and non-intellectuals) are able to convince themselves that the political systems or movements they favor use unappealing means only to achieve higher ends.

Mr. Schapiro also observes that I do not seem "to make sufficient allowance for the quite genuinely attractive side of these Communist societies," such as the humanity of Russians or the exuberance of Cubans, etc. I have a section in my Soviet chapter entitled "People and Community" which deals with such matters and I also point out that such attractions are basically apolitical (e.g., the simplicity and good nature of peasants). A similar section is also a part of the chapter on China ("The People and the Setting"), and although the chapter on Cuba has no separate section devoted to national character and similar matters, the same point is also conveyed about the attractiveness of Hispanic people and culture.

At the end of his review Mr. Schapiro raises the interesting question (which I do not deal with) as to why there were so many Jews among American intellectuals seeking political utopia in the USSR, China, or Cuba. It would certainly have been worthwhile to address this issue, but the book was long enough and I had no chance to explore the leanings of particular groups (why also so many Quakers?). I trust, however, that Stanley Rothman in his forthcoming *Radical Christians, Radical Jews* will shed much new light on this phenomenon.

PAUL HOLLANDER
University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts

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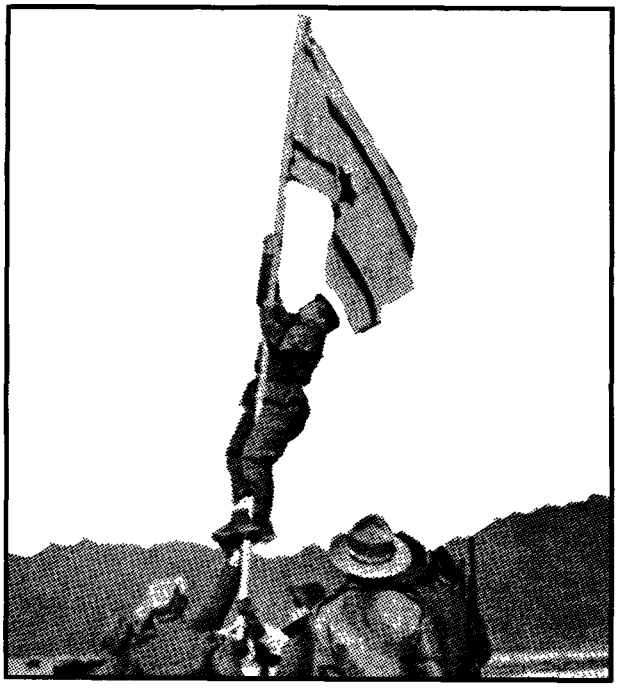

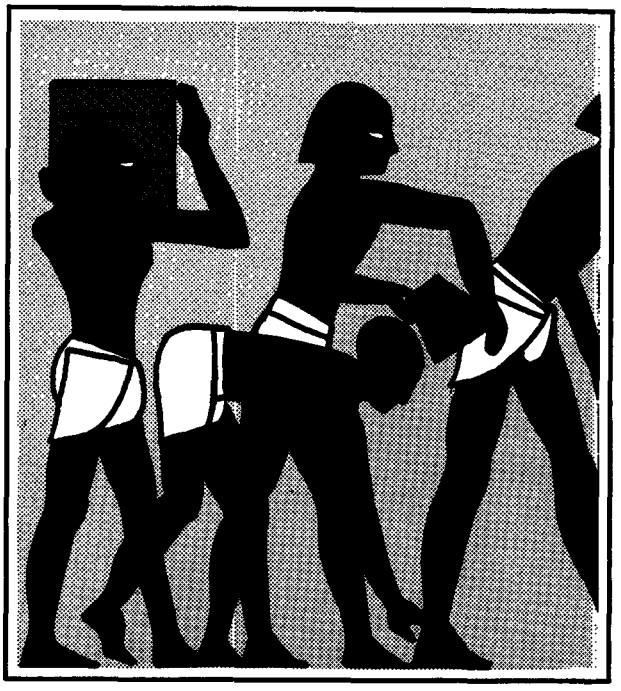

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"Affirmative Action" Under Reagan

Chester E. Finn, Jr.

In a press conference on the anniversary of his inauguration, Ronald Reagan stated that "I have been on the side of opposition to bigotry and discrimination and prejudice, and long before it ever became a kind of national issue under the title of civil rights. And my life has been spent on that side."

Yet the policies and actions of Reagan's administration during its first fourteen months were widely perceived to be unsympathetic to civil-rights progress, if not overtly hostile to the interests of minorities and women. Certainly that is the view of leaders of major civil-rights organizations. The NAACP's Benjamin Hooks told a Senate subcommittee in late January that he could not point to "any action of this administration that would give any hope of comfort to minorities." The National Urban League opened the 1982 edition of its annual report on "The State of Black America" with the statement that "At no point in recent memory had the distance between the national government and black America been greater than it was in 1981, nor had the relationship between the two been more strained." The American Civil Liberties Union distributed a newsletter in February describing "a presidential administration whose hostility to individual rights is relentless." A lawyer with the National Women's Political Caucus says of Reagan that "his record is absolutely deplorable." Apart from an occasional expression of ironic gratitude to the President for galvanizing the sluggish civil-rights movement itself—"He's giving us the glue that's bringing us together," said one Urban League official—the White House evokes little but criticism from such spokesmen and their echoes among the editorial writers and columnists of the major metropolitan newspapers.

One cannot of course know whether Ronald Reagan has ever harbored an unkind impulse or prejudiced thought, but it is now possible to glimpse the outlines of his administration's civil-rights policies and to begin to appraise their execution. The policies, unfortunately, are not as clear as they should be after more than a year in office. Their implementation has been uneven on good days, indefensible on bad ones. What is most regrettable about the administration's two or three authentic blunders, however, is that they cloud, indeed may permanently have polluted, the atmosphere of good faith that is essential if the excesses and distortions committed in the name of "civil rights" in recent years are to be corrected and the concept itself restored to a place of honor and approbation.

That it does not occupy such a place today is due largely to conflict between two quite distinct ideas, both of which have carried the banner of "civil rights" since the mid-60's, and to mounting popular disapproval of some of the actions taken by the federal government in their name.

The first consists of purposeful efforts to bar discrimination against individuals on the basis of their race, religion, sex, physical condition, national origin, and other such characteristics. These efforts are rooted in the Enlightenment ideas that undergird American democracy; in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Nineteenth Amendments to the Constitution; in the civil-rights legislation of the 1860's and 1870's; in a series of Supreme Court decisions beginning with *Brown* v. *Board of Education*; and, especially, in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, that great congressional mandate for equal individual opportunity within a color-blind society.

In pursuit of this goal, the federal government has constructed elaborate means of safeguarding individuals against discrimination based on the attributes of groups to which they belong and has thereby sought to equalize their opportunities to succeed—or to fail—as individuals. These safeguards, in the main, continue to enjoy wide public approval.

The second set of actions taken in the name of "civil rights," however, has consisted of efforts to better the condition of designated groups within the society by redistributing social, economic, political, and educational resources. The underlying rationale has been variously phrased, but always partakes of the concept of achieving parity among groups defined according to the same characteristics that are proscribed in the treatment of individuals.

CHESTER E. FINN, JR. is professor of education and public policy at Vanderbilt University and the author of several studies of educational and social policy, including *Scholars, Dollars, and Bureaucrats*. Mr. Finn would like to thank Elise Rabekoff and Neal Devins for assistance in preparing this article.

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Although foreshadowed by FDR in the "second bill of rights" described in his 1944 State of the Union message, this, too, is primarily a legacy of the mid-1960's, especially of the federal War on Poverty with its dozens of "compensatory" spending programs, and of Executive Order 11246, issued by President Johnson in 1965. That celebrated document required the government and its private contractors to take "affirmative action" to "ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin." (Sex was added in 1967.) Every federal agency was ordered to "establish and maintain a positive program of equal employment opportunity" and the Secretary of Labor was empowered to adopt "such rules and regulations" as were necessary for government contractors to be pressed toward the same result.*

A few months earlier, Bayard Rustin had presciently observed that "The civil-rights movement is evolving from a protest movement into a full-fledged social movement—an evolution calling its very name into question. It is now concerned not merely with removing the barriers to full opportunity but with achieving the fact of equality."† Rustin itemized the problems facing blacks, problems which, "while conditioned by Jim Crow, do not vanish upon its demise. They are more deeply rooted in our socioeconomic order; they are the result of the total society's failure to meet not only the Negro's needs, but human needs generally."

Federal efforts to achieve "the fact of equality" were numerous and imaginative. Many of these sought to better the lot of the poor and disadvantaged in general, especially through the myriad social programs, ranging from Headstart to CETA to food stamps to adoption assistance, that were the building blocks of the contemporary welfare state. Others, however, responded to the demands of more limited groups—women, blacks, the handicapped, the elderly, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans—for divers benefits and services.

Even as the spending programs proliferated and grew, however, Washington developed several further strategies to apportion society's rewards more "equally."

The first was to eliminate such criteria as examinations for employment and tests for entry into selective schools that had the effect of distributing benefits unequally among groups even though the criteria were themselves objective or "color-blind."

The second was the "earmarking," "setting aside," or reserving of certain portions of federal money and other benefits for groups who would not have to compete for them through the processes that governed the allocation of the remainder.

The third was the creation of detailed regulations and procedures for non-federal entities (such as school systems and private employers) within the reach of federal policy that obliged them to make decisions in a race- (or sex-) conscious way.

It mattered little who occupied the Oval Office or which party controlled the executive branch. The Nixon administration, after all, introduced the concept of numerical hiring "goals and timetables," imposed the requirement that individual employers prepare written affirmative-action plans, and invented the "Philadelphia Plan," which amounted to a minority-hiring quota for federal construction contractors. During the brief tenure of Gerald Ford, a simple statutory prohibition against sex discrimination in federally-aided schools and colleges was translated into the voluminous Title IX regulations, intruding Washington into school dress codes, the offerings of university athletic departments, and, for a time, "fatherson" and "mother-daughter" dinners. Ford's Office of Education also promulgated the "Lau Remedies," requiring school districts with twenty or more children who speak a language other than English to teach them in their primary language and to provide them with "bicultural" education as well.

BUT it was during the administration of Jimmy Carter that such "equalizing" strategies were most fully elaborated. This was due in part to the internal politics of the Democratic party that nominated him, for by 1976 the party of Thomas Jefferson had become a fractious assembly of groups that defined themselves by race, ethnicity, physical conditions, gender, and sexual orientation and that allotted delegate seats at its own convention acording to intricate ratios and quotas.

The administration that took office in 1977 set about to favor and reward these constituent groups by yielding to practically every one of their demands. Former Carter appointees in the executive agencies and the White House staff now reflect ruefully on their instructions not to turn away any group or movement that asserted rights or claims, however extravagant. In fact, of course, some—such as Catholics seeking aid for parochial schools—were turned away. But in the main, administration policy, as George Will put it, was "to divide the majestic national river into little racial

* The latent conflict between the color-consciousness of the executive order and the color-blindness of the previous year's Civil Rights Act continues to raise profound legal and constitutional questions about the extent of the President's authority in promulgating and enforcing the order. The Supreme Court's *Weber* decision quite unintentionally deepened those questions, as is incisively shown in a brilliant law note by Andree Kahn Blumstein, "Doing Good the Wrong Way: The Case for Delimiting Presidential Power Under Executive Order No. 11246," *Vanderbilt Law Review*, Vol. 33:921, 1980.

† "From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement," COMMENTARY, February 1965.

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and ethnic creeks," making the United States "less a nation than an angry menagerie of factions scrambling for preference in the government's allocation of entitlements."

In that spirit, and pursuant to a one-paragraph congressional ban on discrimination against the handicapped, the Carter administration promulgated hundreds of pages of regulations mandating that subway stations and 19th-century college laboratory buildings alike be "retrofitted" for wheelchair use, notwithstanding the multibillion dollar cost—little or none of it reimbursed by Washington.

The civil-service "reforms" that Carter pressed through Congress radically changed the basis of the federal government's own "affirmative-action" plans. Prior to 1978, those plans rested—as do private-sector plans even now—on the concept of "under-utilization," defined by the government as the presence of "fewer minorities or women in a particular job group than would reasonably be expected by their availability." That construction at least allowed agency heads and the Civil Service Commission to base their "goals and timetables" on the distribution within particular geographic locations of minority-group members and women possessing the skills and qualifications needed for specific jobs in the federal service.

The 1978 reforms, however, replaced "under-utilization" with "underrepresentation," defined as "a situation in which the number of members of a minority-group designation . . . within a category of civil-service employment constitutes a lower percentage of the total number of employees within the employment category than the percentage that the minority constituted within the labor force of the United States. . . ." This wiped out all consideration of individual qualifications and of local job-market conditions; it said, in effect, that no government official could rest until every "designated" minority was represented in every grade and classification of federal employment in every agency in exact proportion to its incidence in the adult population of the United States as a whole: the most explicit, exacting, and inflexible quota system of all.

In its final weeks, the Carter administration also agreed to scrap the principal test that the government routinely administered to judge the qualifications of persons seeking to enter the civil service.* The reason was that minority-group members often failed the examination, which meant it purportedly had an "adverse impact" on them. So much for merit in the public sector.

As for non-federal employers, the Carter administration also made great "progress." Under Executive Order 11246 and its cousins, the enforcement of contract compliance had been handled by agencies with at least some general knowledge of the institutional character of their own contractors and the nature of the pertinent labor pools. Carter now consolidated the entire endeavor in the Labor Department and greatly enlarged its Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP)—a zealous agency with a single responsibility and just one set of outside constituencies, namely, the groups whose interests are advanced by its enforcement efforts.

That agency set about with great vigor to expand the scope and reach of its activities. It came to rely heavily on the "back-pay" sanction, whereby an employer found to have been insufficiently ardent about affirmative-action goals could be compelled to grant up to five years' pay as compensation to those who supposedly would have earned it had he acted differently at an earlier date. It welcomed hundreds of complaints against employers from civil-rights organizations generally, and women's groups particularly, thereby effectively enlisting them as scouts and informants.

A few blocks away, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), firmly led by Eleanor Holmes Norton, set out both to eliminate the huge backlog of uninvestigated discrimination complaints by individuals and to step up its self-generated anti-discrimination and affirmative-action efforts. One of its principal endeavors was to convince employers that they did not have to worry about charges of "reverse discrimination" if they gave preference to minority-group members and women. Offering its own interpretation of the history of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Commission published in the Federal Register its confident belief "that by the enactment of Title VII Congress did not intend to expose those who comply with the Act to charges that they are violating the very statute they are seeking to implement. Such a result would immobilize or reduce the efforts of many who would otherwise take action to improve the opportunities of minorities and women. . . ."

The Commission then set forth an ingenious Catch-22 in which persons who thought themselves victims of "reverse discrimination" could expect no help from the EEOC. For, after announcing that "These guidelines constitute the Commission's interpretation of Title VII and will be applied in the processing of claims of discrimination," the Commissioners explained that employers engaged in the work-force analysis that is part of affirmative action need not "establish a violation of Title VII" so long as they find that their past practices "have or tend to have an adverse effect on employment opportunities of members of previously excluded groups" or "result in disproportionate treatment." Race- and sex-conscious actions taken to end the disproportionality would not be held by the EEOC to constitute discrimination. Hence, anyone who felt himself

* See Walter Berns, "Let Me Call You Quota, Sweetheart," COMMENTARY, May 1981.

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victimized by reverse discrimination would have to look elsewhere for redress—and the EEOC would cheerfully arm the employer with evidence that in its view he had acted lawfully.

The Carter administration also accelerated the government's efforts to set aside various pots of federal funds for the exclusive use of "minority contractors." A 95-page document published by the Commerce Department in early 1980 listed 25 major programs of "business contract opportunities" and explained that "most of these . . . are solely for minority business." The centerpiece was the "Section 8(a) Program" under which the Small Business Administration arranges for itself and other federal agencies to bypass the usual procurement procedures (including competitive bidding) in order to award contracts to minority firms. By the end of the Carter administration, nearly $2 billion a year was being spent in this manner, and it was clear that the idea had barely begun to tap the creativity of the executive branch. In March 1980, for example, the Department of Transportation, with no legislative sanction at all, issued a regulation stipulating that general contractors bidding on the department's many lush construction projects (including highways, airports, and mass transit) would have to assure the government that at least 10 percent of the value of the work would be sub-contracted to minority companies.

None of this, however, could have occurred without judicial sanction. The question was how to make sure that the courts would not fall back on the principles of "equal protection" and "nondiscrimination" to deny preferential treatment, set-asides, and quotas, whether undertaken by the government itself or by corporations, universities, and others acting with its encouragement.

That was an open question when Jimmy Carter assumed the Presidency, but not when he left it. For during those four years, the Supreme Court of the United States, following the lengthy briefs and fervent pleadings of Carter's Justice Department, gave its blessing to race-consciousness, set-asides, and quotas. The background and reasoning of the three key decisions, *Bakke*, *Weber*, and *Fullilove*, have been thoroughly examined in these pages and elsewhere.* But it is essential to recall that in the realm of civil-rights litigation, the courts have regularly paid careful attention to the policies, action, and legal reasoning of the executive branch, and have often allowed themselves to be led by it. Through 1980, there was little question in what direction they were being led.

THUS Ronald Reagan assumed office after a decade and a half in which the Presidency had vigorously sought to advance group interests through regulation, judicial interpretation, and government expenditure, and in which policy conflicts between group interests and individual rights, on the one hand, and between group interests and evenhanded national standards, on the other, were almost always resolved in favor of the interested groups.

Well before the 1980 election, one could see ample evidence of popular and congressional dissatisfaction. On Capitol Hill, the House of Representatives repeatedly voted to ban school busing, employment quotas, and other involuntary or coercive federal "enforcement" efforts. Poll after poll revealed that these votes conformed to public opinion. For even as indices of individual prejudice steadily declined, and support for such voluntary programs as compensatory education and job training remained high, the American people expressed mounting displeasure with group favoritism. A 1977 Gallup survey, for example, found that only 11 percent of all respondents (including just 12 percent of women and 30 percent of nonwhites) condoned "preferential treatment in getting jobs and places in college," while 82 percent of all men, 80 percent of women, and 55 percent of nonwhites believed that "ability, as determined by test scores, should be the main consideration."

This did not deter the Democratic party. "[M]uch more remains to be done," said its 1980 platform:

> An effective affirmative-action program is an essential component of our commitment to expanding civil-rights protections. The federal government must be a model for private employers, making special efforts in recruitment, training, and promotion to aid minority Americans in overcoming both the historic patterns and the historic burdens of discrimination. . . . Our commitment to civil rights embraces not only a commitment to legal equality, but a commitment to economic justice as well. It embraces a recognition of the right of every citizen—Black and Hispanic, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Americans, and the majority who are women—to a fair share in our economy.

But this time the Republican alternative was clearly different. The voters, for once, were to have a choice. The 1980 GOP platform stated that:

> The truths we hold and the values we share affirm that no individual should be victimized by unfair discrimination because of race, sex, advanced age, physical handicap, difference of national origin or religion, or economic circumstance. However, equal opportunity should not be jeopardized by bureaucratic regulations and decisions which rely on quotas, ratios, and

* See William J. Bennett and Terry Eastland, "Why Bakke Won't End Reverse Discrimination," September 1978; Carl Cohen, "Why Racial Preference is Illegal and Immoral," June 1979, and "Justice Debased: The Weber Decision," September 1979; and the remarkable 122-page insert that Senator Orrin Hatch placed in the *Congressional Record* on September 3, 1980.

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numerical requirements to exclude some individuals in favor of others, thereby rendering such regulations and decisions inherently discriminatory.

As is well known, the party—and Reagan himself—also promised to shrink the welfare state, to ease the burden of regulation on employers and other institutions in the society, and to emphasize economic revitalization as the surest route to individual and group betterment. "Faster growth, higher incomes, and plentiful jobs," said the platform, "are exactly what the unemployed, the underprivileged, and minorities have been seeking for many years."

Immediately after the election, various task forces and transition teams undertook to convert these principles and goals into specific policy prescriptions. The most comprehensive of these were embodied in the Heritage Foundation's celebrated 1093-page volume, *Mandate for Leadership*. This was not an official document, to be sure, but was widely and accurately regarded as the clearest statement of the new administration's proper agenda as seen through the eyes of Washington-savvy "Reaganites."

The Heritage document was especially clear about affirmative action, which "runs counter to American ideals" and "should be jettisoned as soon as it is politically possible to do so." While Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, barring employment discrimination, should be scrupulously enforced, the section of Executive Order 11246 requiring affirmative action by government contractors should be replaced by language banning both discrimination *and* preferential treatment, and employers should be forbidden to "maintain any records indicating the race, creed, color, sex, religion, or national origin of any applicant or employee." The Heritage recommendations, in short, were that "color-blindness" should again become the standard for employers, admissions offices, and federal agencies alike; and that "discrimination" should again be defined as a willful action, not a statistical imbalance.

Just as civil-rights policy comprised only a modest fraction of the multitudinous recommendations of *Mandate for Leadership*, so has it filled a relatively small space on the new administration's agenda. Yet it resists isolation. For as individual rights have been displaced by group interests, all governmental actions affecting the economic well-being, status, and power of identifiable groups have come to be viewed and debated as civil-rights issues. Of course it is expedient for any group to marshal its crusade for advantage behind the noble banner of civil rights. But it would also be unrealistic not to recognize that reduced federal social spending and high unemployment strike particularly hard at those whose well-being in fact depends on public-sector programs or—by virtue of being marginally employed in the private sector—on general prosperity.

There can be no doubt that Ronald Reagan's relations with civil-rights leaders, with their allies in the labor movement, and perhaps even with editorial writers of the New York *Times* would be warmer if he were not seeking to cut food stamps, to turn welfare over to the states, and to eliminate CETA in the middle of a severe recession. To be sure, as Rustin observed seventeen long years ago, these issues are "not civil rights, strictly speaking, but social and economic conditions," and it is well to resist the temptation to confuse them. But that is no small task in the best of times, and Reagan's social and economic policies make it more difficult, not least for himself, as callousness and indifference vie with kindliness and decency in the still hazy image the nation is trying to draw of the man it elected to lead it.

The first clues a new administration gives as to the directions it will actually take after assuming office are often hidden in its personnel decisions. Here, with respect to both the symbolism and the substance of civil rights, the Reagan team enjoyed one triumph (the nomination of Sandra Day O'Connor to the Supreme Court), made one blunder, and fell into a trap.

The blunder occurred so fast that few noticed. Barely four weeks after inauguration day, Attorney General William French Smith announced that the new administration would abide by rather than contest the agreement Carter had made to jettison the PACE examination that the government used to gauge the abilities of applicants for civil-service jobs. Although the new administration won minor modifications in the consent decree, the decision not to join the fundamental issue of principle suggested that Reagan's people were unwilling to defend the concept of merit in the face of unequal test results. The special irony of this decision, as Donald J. Devine, the director of the Office of Personnel Management, observed several months later, "is that there is presently no 'adverse impact' upon minority-group members in filling PACE-covered positions."

The administration seemed a bit sheepish. The Attorney General acknowledged that the "revised decree does not achieve an ideal result or reflect the framework that might have been devised had this administration been in control of the litigation from the outset." Devine was blunter. He expressed "great reluctance" at having to carry out the agreement, and predicted that "the costs of implementation will be very high."

The personnel trap the administration fell into may have been unavoidable. Reagan's predecessors had encouraged civil-rights leaders to judge their commitment to equal opportunity by the number of minority-group members and women they appointed to policy-making positions in the executive branch. Embedded in this type of categorical hiring are the immediate benefit to the individuals

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selected, the symbolic reward of the groups they represent, and the suggestion that the policies they shape will somehow be more attentive to the long-term interests of those groups than would the actions of white males.

This practice matured during Jimmy Carter's tenure, too, and created something of a backlash. A wry joke circulating in education circles, for example, as the enormous political superstructure of the new Department of Education was staffed with Carter appointees, held that each of the dozen assistant secretaries could hire four deputies so long as at least one of these was a woman, one a black, and one a Hispanic.

The Reagan administration did not go so far, but fell into the trap nevertheless. Rather than stating firmly that race, sex, and ethnicity would have no bearing whatsoever on personnel selection, the White House began circulating lists that identified presidential appointees by those very characteristics. Thus one learned that, as of December 3, 1981, out of some 2,865 non-career positions filled by that time, President Reagan had appointed 877 women, 80 Hispanics (many of them, of course, also women), and 130 blacks. In fact, that was a pretty good record, and many of the individuals appeared to be excellent, but merit seemed less important than their role as pawns on an affirmative-action chessboard.

The big chessboard, however, is not federal employment but the thousands of private employers and millions of employees whose moves are governed by affirmative-action rules made in Washington. Along with compulsory busing, this is the area of civil-rights enforcement that has stirred the greatest controversy, incurred the deepest resentment, and come closest to substituting group entitlements for individual rights. Here, surely, Ronald Reagan's unambiguous ideology, the explicit policies of his party, and the mandate conferred by his landslide victory would lead to historic changes in the assumptions governing employment decisions. What was obviously needed was a clear statement of principle, a consistent government-wide policy, and a commitment to hunt down quotas in every tangled thicket of regulation, enforcement procedure, and litigation until none remained.

This, unfortunately, is not what happened in 1981. From its early months, the administration seemed unable to decide whether federally-mandated race- and sex-conscious employment practices were an issue of principle or a problem of paperwork.

The Justice Department generally took the high road. "While well intended," Attorney General Smith told the American Law Institute in May, "quotas invariably have the practical effect of placing inflexible restraints on the opportunities afforded one race in an effort to remedy past discrimination against another. They stigmatize the beneficiaries. . . ."

William Bradford Reynolds, the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights, was eloquent and specific in his maiden appearance before a Congressional subcommittee in September:

> We no longer will insist upon or in any respect support the use of quotas or any other numerical or statistical formulae designed to provide to non-victims of discrimination preferential treatment based on race, sex, national origin, or religion. To pursue any other course is, in our view, unsound as a matter of law and unwise as a matter of policy.

After recounting the evolution of federal equal-employment-opportunity doctrine from nondiscrimination to "goals and timetables," he summed up:

> By elevating the rights of groups over the rights of individuals, racial preferences . . . are at war with the American ideal of equal opportunity for each person to achieve whatever his or her industry and talents warrant. . . . Nor is there any moral justification for such an approach. Separate treatment of people in the field of employment, based on nothing more than personal characteristics of race or gender, is as offensive to standards of human decency today as it was some 84 years ago when countenanced under *Plessy* v. *Ferguson*.

The Justice Department, therefore, would embrace "the principle of equal opportunity without preference in the field of public and private employment" but "in no way intends to relax its commitment to remedy proven discrimination."*

THE policies and actions of the Justice Department are consequential, to be sure. It is the government's principal litigator, it decides which cases to prosecute on what grounds, it formulates the remedies that Washington seeks from the courts, and during the Carter administration it was the author of the legal brief which urged the Supreme Court to sanction race-conscious university-admissions policies, race-conscious funding set-asides, and race-conscious decisions by private employers. At the very end of his term, Carter also gave the Attorney General the power to "coordinate" the civil-rights activities of all executive-branch agencies, though as yet this vague authority has not really been tested.

But the Justice Department does not write the regulations governing affirmative action by federal contractors, nor does it police compliance with them. Lyndon Johnson had entrusted that author-

* The Justice Department, particularly its Civil Rights Division, is now the focus of criticism by activists inside and outside the government who are displeased with Reagan administration civil-rights policies. Staff attorneys regularly leak copies of documents thought to be damaging, and a number of them have publicly threatened to resign in protest. (Their boss, Assistant Attorney General Reynolds, replied that they were most welcome to do so.)

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ity to the Secretary of Labor, and Jimmy Carter consolidated the entire enforcement bureaucracy in the Labor Department. That vast enterprise now consists of almost 1,500 civil servants who monitor the employment practices of some 17,000 corporations, universities, and other contractors with more than 26 million workers. Because an employer with facilities in more than one labor market must maintain a separate affirmative-action plan for each, approximately 108,000 such plans are now required, and these must ordinarily be updated annually. A two-inch-thick manual explains how. There are five protected classes: women, American Indians and Eskimos, Asian or Pacific Islanders, non-Hispanic blacks, and Hispanics. Each contractor must survey his own employees and the available labor pool at each facility in relation to each job classification and its necessary qualifications (also organized in federal categories) and, where "underutilization" is detected, must establish and gain Labor Department approval for numerical "goals and timetables" to correct it. But these efforts are not permitted to result in the employment of one minority group to the disadvantage of others, or in the employment of one sex within a minority group to the disadvantage of the other. And so on and on.

The burden on employers, of course, is heavy. At a recent Senate hearing, the general counsel of Johns Hopkins University displayed a 2½-foot stack of documents weighing 65 pounds that her university had produced in compliance with OFCCP requirements. The process is manifestly costly and sometimes patently absurd (as when half of a Hispanic assistant professor of German must be hired to meet a "goal"). The basic issue, however, is not burden but principle: should the federal government ever require employers who have not engaged in discriminatory acts to meet quotas based on racial, ethnic, and gender classifications that are themselves proscribed by law?

One expected the Reagan administration's answer to be a resounding no and that its earliest actions would include, as the Heritage Foundation and various task forces had urged, replacement of the executive-order language mandating "affirmative action" by a flat ban on quotas, ratios, and preferences.

But while a suspension of "midnight regulations" did prevent some new and yet more exacting procedures devised in the last hours of the Carter administration from going into effect, it was many months before the new administration's own intentions began to emerge from the Labor Department. And when they did it was instantly apparent that the issue of affirmative action was being construed as simply a problem of excessive paper work. The first indication was contained in Labor Secretary Donovan's remarks to the National Press Club in late April, accurately characterized in the *Wall Street Journal* headline the next day: "Labor Department Will Take It Easy In Job-Bias Fight: Secretary Donovan Vows to 'Get Off Peoples' Backs,' Cut Down the Paperwork." For the Secretary had, indeed, stated that "The President and I are firmly behind affirmative action" but want to take enforcement "out of the arena of push-pull-slap-punch" and "to cut down on the damn paperwork." He mentioned that a department task force was reviewing the problem.

The results of that review, unveiled in late August, were by then predictable. Rather than sweeping away the entire concept of goals and timetables, the proposed new regulations simply reduced the number of businesses that would be required to establish them, the number of forms that would have to be completed, and the frequency with which affirmative-action plans would have to be updated. In addition, the concept of absolute statistical parity was replaced by a somewhat looser standard: precise hiring goals and timetables would henceforth only be required when the "utilization" of women and minorities was less than 80 percent of their "availability."

These new regulations are not yet in force, as the usual public-comment period was extended for additional months. In the meantime, seemingly no one is satisfied with the administration's pragmatic approach. Eleanor Smeal of the National Organization for Women called it "another major setback . . . for equality for women." Carol Grossman of the Women's Equity Action League expressed alarm that the higher threshold levels (government contracts of $1 million rather than $50,000, 250 employees rather that 50) would exempt "some of the largest educational institutions in this country." But the U.S. Chamber of Commerce stated that the proposed changes did not go nearly far enough; the Chamber's position, its spokesman said, was that "voluntary use of goals, timetables, and good-faith efforts" should replace mandatory requirements.

In its report card on the administration's first year, the Heritage Foundation also expressed considerable displeasure with the OFCCP. That agency "attempted some modest changes in its regulations," the Heritage writer noted, but this was "patchwork" that "does not address the real problems with contract-compliance programs. . . . OFCCP is continuing to view itself as a purely punitive agency. It has failed to follow [the previous Heritage] recomendations. . . ."

The Labor Department is continuing to review the voluminous comments elicited by its proposed procedures, and will not be ready to put revised regulations into effect before late spring. When it does, those familiar with the current deliberations say, the "threshold" will again be lowered somewhat, meaning that more contractors will be subject to affimative action, and while "voluntary" compliance will be "encouraged," there

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will be no backing away from the concept of compulsory hiring goals and timetables.

It is little wonder that civil-rights groups and the Heritage Foundation are both perturbed. For it appears that the bureaucracy has kept control of an issue of fundamental principle and is treating it as if it were just another federal program in need of technical refinement, marginal recalibration, and political compromise. Race- and gender-based employment quotas will continue to be required of thousands of universities, corporations, and others that hold federal contracts. Seemingly the only issue in dispute is how many thousands.

ALTHOUGH the Labor Department may have lost sight of the underlying policy issue in affirmative action, critics of the administration have not. Shortly before Arthur S. Flemming was dismissed by the President, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights that he chaired published a lengthy "statement" entitled *Affirmative Action in the 1980's: Dismantling the Process of Discrimination*. This document bears careful attention, for it undertakes nothing less than the permanent recodification of civil-rights doctrine.

No longer is "discrimination" to be construed as specific actions, inactions, and decisions by which individuals are denied specific rights or benefits that they would have received were it not for such immutable characteristics as race or sex. The new definition is altogether different. "Discriminatory actions," in the view of the Civil Rights Commission,

> are not only pervasive, occurring in every sector of society, but also cumulative, with effects limited neither to the time nor the particular structural area in which they occur. This process of discrimination, therefore, extends across generations, across organizations, and across social structures in self-reinforcing cycles. . . . Discrimination against minorities and women should now be viewed as an interlocking process involving the attitudes and actions of individuals and the organizations and social structures that guide individual behavior. That process, started by past events, now routinely bestows privileges, favors, and advantages on white males and imposes disadvantages and penalties on minorities and women. This process is also self-perpetuating. . . .

Not even the law can be allowed to stand in the way of progress. Although itself charged by the 1964 Civil Rights Act to "serve as a national clearinghouse for information in respect to denials of equal protection of the laws . . . ," the Commission now holds that "because civil-rights laws do not prohibit all forms of discrimination," because there may be "practical difficulties in establishing that a legal violation has, in fact, occurred," and because, "despite consistently unequal results, some discrimination is entirely lawful," then, "if civil-rights laws are interpreted to restrict the use of affirmative action to those acts that are or may be illegal, they can put beyond remedial reach essential components of the process of discrimination."

The Commission cannot accept that possibility. Therefore it is necessary either to go entirely outside the law, to what it terms "voluntary affirmative action," or to interpret the laws more generously. Conveniently, the Supreme Court has simplified both tasks. As the Commission exultantly explains, "The trilogy of Supreme Court affirmative-action cases (*Bakke*, *Weber*, and *Fullilove*), despite their limits as legal precedent, shows a strong commitment to affirmative-action measures designed to eliminate all forms of discrimination, *de jure* or *de facto*, illegal or legal. Only *Bakke* lacked an unequivocal outcome encouraging affirmative-action plans that include 'preferential' treatment and 'quotas.' *Bakke*, however, leaves ample room for effective affirmative-action efforts."

The reasoning is extraordinary. Anything, past or present, public or private, legal or illegal, that tends to work to the benefit of white males constitutes discrimination. Any actions taken to eliminate discrimination must be deemed either to be required by law or, at least, not forbidden by law. Such actions will normally include preferential treatment and quotas. But not to worry. For "when discrimination is a current that carries along all but those who struggle against it, there can be no true 'color-blindness' or 'neutrality.' In such contexts, all anti-discrimination measures, whether or not they take race, sex, or national origin into account, will help some individuals and hinder others. To criticize such efforts on the ground that they constitute 'preferential treatment' inaccurately implies unfairness. . . ."

It is small wonder that President Reagan asked for Chairman Flemming's resignation at about the time this report became public.* Not only were the Commission's views diametrically opposed to the principles of nondiscrimination that Reagan and his party had pledged to support during their markedly successful 1980 campaign; they also reversed the principles enunciated by liberal Democrats when Congress passed the 1964 Civil Rights

* Mr. Reagan proposed to replace Flemming with Clarance M. Pendleton, former president of the San Diego Urban League, who is black, and to replace Commission Vice Chairman Stephen Horn with Mary Louise Smith, former chairman of the Republican National Committee, who is white. The administration's third candidate for the six-member Civil Rights Commission was to have been B. Sam Hart, an evangelical minister from Philadelphia, who is black, but Hart's name was withdrawn, ostensibly because of irregularities in his personal financial affairs. It was also the case, however, that Hart's views stirred considerable controversy within the civil-rights community and on Capitol Hill, for the President had had the audacity to pick a person who disapproved of busing and quotas and who stated that "I do not consider homosexuality a civil-rights issue."

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Act. As Justice Rehnquist recalled in his brilliant dissent to the *Weber* decision, such active participants in those deliberations as Emmanuel Celler, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, and Hubert Humphrey, floor manager for the bill in the Senate, repeatedly insisted that nothing in the legislation would permit any policy save color-blindness. "Contrary to the allegations of some opponents," Senator Humphrey said, "there is nothing in it that will give any power to the [Equal Employment Opportunity] Commission or to any court to require hiring, firing, or promotion of employees in order to meet a racial 'quota' or to achieve a certain racial balance. That bugaboo has been brought up a dozen times; but it is nonexistent." Senator Thomas Kuchel added that "Employers and labor organizations could not discriminate in favor of or against a person because of his race, his religion, or his national origin. In such matters . . . the bill now before us . . . is color-blind."

Now it can be argued, as the Civil Rights Commission does, that this is all water long since passed over the dam: that the legislative history of the 1964 legislation has been superseded by the Supreme Court's blessing of race-consciousness in *Bakke*, of minority set-asides in *Fullilove*, and of "voluntary" affirmative-action programs that entail reverse discrimination in *Weber*. But the Court did not *require* race-consciousness, set-asides, or quotas; it merely said they were not forbidden. Besides, the Court may be persuaded to change its mind. There is ample scope for a President who knows what he thinks and who acts on the basis of his convictions to take specific actions to restore the definition of civil rights to the doctrine of nondiscrimination; to ask Congress to take complementary actions; and to go back to the judiciary with briefs very different from those the Carter administration submitted in the major cases of the previous four years.

But it is not clear that the Reagan administration has any such resolve. One need not dwell overmuch on the President's own confusion, when asked in a December press conference what he thought of the *Weber* decision. For the reporter explained only that this concerned a "voluntary agreement to conduct affirmative-action programs for training minorities and moving them up in the workforce," and made no mention of quotas or reverse discrimination. Reagan remarked that "if this is something that simply allows the training and the bringing up so there are more opportunities for them, in voluntary agreement between the union and management, I can't see any fault with that. I'm for that." This elicited a cheer from the New York *Times*, but embarrassed White House aides explained later that "the President and the Department of Justice find this racial quota unacceptable," and that Assistant Attorney General Reynolds had indeed spoken for Reagan when he said that the *Weber* case was "wrongly decided" and that the Justice Department would seek to persuade the Supreme Court to reverse itself in another case. Perhaps one day it will.

But there have been enough other instances of confusion and embarrassment. The worst disarray was to be found at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, whose acting chairman told Congress in October that he disapproved of the Labor Department's proposal to reduce the number of federal contractors required to file affirmative-action plans. Indeed, he opposed any lessening of vigilance or narrowing of scope. Yet a few months later, the EEOC's own new general counsel instructed staff attorneys to switch their emphasis from "class-action" lawsuits to individual suits, and to confine the employer's liability in sex-harassment cases to situations where management is itself accused of such harassment rather than—as in the current situation—holding the employer responsible for harassment of one employee by another.

In the meantime, the White House had nominated to be the next EEOC chairman a man whose only qualifications were his color (black) and his party affiliation (Republican). Faced with bitter protests from civil-rights groups, and mounting congressional opposition, the administration was forced to withdraw the nomination in February. (The young black attorney subsequently nominated is quite able indeed.)

Turf fights and bickering have also characterized the relationship between the Education and Justice Departments. Secretary Bell made two sensible proposals intended both to reduce the regulatory burden on colleges and universities and to curb harassment of them in the name of "civil rights." He suggested that Title IX, barring sex discrimination by federally-aided schools and colleges, was meant by Congress to cover only the treatment of students, not of employees, an interpretation that has some support in the legislative history and that has been sustained by some lower courts. He also urged the administration to assert that federal aid to college students did not constitute aid to the institutions they attended—an interpretation that would spare about 1,000 colleges and universities from compliance with the major aid-based civil-rights regulations (though not from others, such as Title VII, that apply to all employers). But in both instances, Justice said no, and the White House sided with it.

Common sense and Republican principle did prevail in most school and college desegregation cases. A number of protracted and acrimonious lawsuits involving state colleges and universities were settled through mediation and negotiation (though this administration, like its predecessors, has maintained the schizophrenic policy of requiring black and white colleges to integrate while

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spending hundreds of millions of dollars a year to assist "traditionally black" colleges to maintain their distinctive institutional identities). And the executive branch has repeatedly signaled its opposition to mandatory busing at the grade-school level.

Finally, it seemed, federal officials were unafraid to acknowledge what most people had long known: involuntary pupil transfers for the sake of racial balance often do more harm than good. "[I]n many communities where courts have implemented busing plans," Attorney General Smith told the American Law Institute,

> resegregation has occurred. In some instances upwardly mobile whites and blacks have merely chosen to leave the urban environment. In other instances, a concern for the quality of the schools their children attend has caused parents to move beyond the reach of busing orders. Other parents have chosen to enroll their children in private schools that they consider better able to provide a quality education. The desertion of our cities' school system has sometimes eliminated any chance of achieving racial balance even if intra-city busing were ordered.

Assistant Attorney General Reynolds advised a Senate subcommittee in mid-October that in future school-segregation cases, the Justice Department would "define the violation precisely and seek to limit the remedy only to those schools in which racial imbalance is the product of intentionally segregative acts of state officials." And even in those instances, while seeking "removal of all state-enforced racial barriers to open access to public schools," the Department would abjure compulsory busing. "We are not going to compel children who don't choose to have an integrated education to have one," Reynolds bluntly explained to a House subcommittee on November 19, and Justice appears to have followed this doctrine, most recently by approving a voluntary desegregation plan for Chicago.

Reynolds did, however, urge Congress, then pondering an array of anti-busing bills and court-limiting measures, "not to draft the statutory prohibition so broadly that it bans as well other desegregation techniques" such as "involuntary transfers of teachers to break up state-created racially identifiable faculties." That, of course, implies the race-conscious assignment of teachers to schools as a *remedy* for segregation. And it recalled the one large inconsistency in Reynolds's testimony on employment discrimination the previous month. Then he had suggested that, while the Justice Department would not ask courts to order employers to use anything but "fair and nondiscriminatory selection procedures" in deciding whom to hire, the government would "seek percentage *recruitment* goals for monitoring purposes. . . . These recruitment goals will be related to the percentage of minority or female applicants that might be expected to result under a nondiscriminatory employment policy" (emphasis added).

If governmental race consciousness is unconstitutional, and if constancy is a virtue, one can infer from Reynolds's willingness to seek statistical recruitment goals, and his openness to race-conscious teacher assignments, that the nation's senior civil-rights enforcer has not entirely clarified the principles that undergird his department's policies and actions.

UNFORTUNATELY, this is not uncharacteristic of the Reagan administration's overall handling of civil-rights issues during its first year: a fitful and uneven process, in which the nation's long slide into color-coded policies and group entitlements was somewhat slowed but hardly stopped by an administration that seemed uncertain whether it really wanted to apply the brakes and not altogether sure where to find them.

In one excruciating instance, however, Reagan hit the wrong pedal and hit it hard. This, of course, was his decision to grant tax exemptions to segregated private schools. Although he attempted to recoup a few days later by asking Congress to outlaw such exemptions, and later still by asking the Supreme Court to resolve the matter, much harm was done. The problem is not that many private schools engage in racial discrimination as a matter of policy. The Internal Revenue Service is aware of only about 100 such institutions among more than 20,000 private schools. The problem, rather, is that in this instance the administration indicated its willingness to tolerate overt racial discrimination against individuals by institutions that, while unmistakably private, are nevertheless seeking favorable treatment from Washington. This was no case of group entitlements, of government-mandated equality of result, or of requiring preferential treatment for those previously disadvantaged by their sex or color. It was purely and simply a matter of old-fashioned racism and of what the government's policy ought to be toward those few schools that openly deny admission to black youngsters on account of their color.

No matter that Congress had never written a law specifically stating that such schools could not obtain tax exemptions. The Reagan administration inherited eleven years of court-sanctioned precedent. True, it also inherited a lively dispute about how to *enforce* the ban—how, for example, to handle a school that professed not to discriminate but that had only white students in attendance—and an even livelier debate occasioned by a handful of fundamentalist schools that assert a religious basis for their discriminatory practices. But there was no need to reverse the underlying policy. Worse, the decision to do so resurrected the ghost of Jim Crow. It signaled that perhaps the administration is not really color-blind, an impression reinforced by subsequent documentary

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evidence that the White House had yielded to heavy pressure from Mississippi's Trent Lott and other Southern Congressmen acting on behalf of all-white private schools that had in fact been founded as refuges from public-school desegregation. Although the President had the grace to acknowledge that the whole issue was badly handled, it did lasting damage to his administration's credibility in the field of civil rights, as well as to the nation's image of private education.

THE administration inflicted another wound on itself with clumsy and irresolute handling of the delicate voting-rights legislation.* Because the right to vote is at once the most elemental of civil rights and the one with the most direct impact on elected officials, attention began to focus on it more than a year before the August 1982 expiration of portions of the existing federal law. But the administration refrained from taking a clear position on several complex issues when the House of Representatives considered them in the spring and summer of 1981. Not until the House overwhelmingly approved its version in October did the administration begin to get specific, and throughout the autumn the papers carried frequent reports of internecine warfare among Reagan's advisers. This generated considerable suspicion among civil-rights groups, which were also beginning to accuse the Justice Department of yielding to political pressure in its handling of voting-rights cases under the existing law, an allegation that administration officials, of course, vehemently denied.

With exquisitely bad timing, the administration finally chose to state its position on key details of the voting-rights bill to a Senate committee in late January 1982, in the midst of the controversy over private-school tax exemptions. Thus when Senator Kennedy declaimed that the administration faced a "crisis of confidence" in its handling of women and minority rights, and Attorney General Smith responded that "the President doesn't have a discriminatory bone in his body," the hearing room full of civil-rights activists erupted into laughter.

The major issue now in dispute, however, is grave indeed, and deserves solemn attention. The President would have been well-advised to spell out his position on it earlier. The question is whether an action is "discriminatory" only when it can be shown that the actor intended to discriminate, or whether an action with unequal effects or consequences can reasonably be termed "discriminatory" without reference to motivation or intent.

This is a familiar debate in school-segregation and employment-discrimination cases, but it did not enter the domain of voting rights until 1980 when the Supreme Court held that neither the Fifteenth Amendment nor the existing Voting Rights Act barred electoral arangements that were adopted without discriminatory intent even if their practical effect was to dilute the black vote in a particular community. At issue in the 1980 case was the constitutionality of the "at large" election that Mobile, Alabama has used to select its city commissioners since 1911. Although the population of Mobile is more than one-third black, no black had ever won election to the commission. Regrettable though this may be, Justice Stewart wrote, the Fifteenth Amendment "imposes but one limitation on the powers of the states. It forbids them to discriminate against Negroes in matters having to do with voting. . . . [R]acially discriminatory motivation is a necessary ingredient of a Fifteenth Amendment violation," and the lower court had found that Mobile's black citizens "register and vote without hindrance." The Fifteenth Amendment, Stewart said, "does not entail the right to have Negro candidates elected."

Civil-rights leaders strongly objected to this decision, contending that it is virtually impossible to prove "intent," particularly with respect to local arrangements made decades earlier. They prevailed upon the House of Representatives to amend the Voting Rights Act to make explicit that plaintiffs need only prove discriminatory or unequal effects. (Another 1980 Supreme Court decision held that Congress has the power to adopt such a standard.) But critics of this change, now concentrating their efforts on the Senate, contend that the "effects" standard is tantamount to imposing racial quotas on election outcomes. It could mean, they say, that a community in which blacks comprise 20 percent of the electorate would be violating the law unless 20 percent of those elected to public office were also black. This, they suggest, might lead to federally-imposed "proportional representation" in local and state elections and would, contends Senator Orrin Hatch, "turn this country upside down."

President Reagan appears to agree with that view. In his December 17, 1981 press conference, he said that "the effect rule could lead to the type of thing in which effect could be judged if there was some disproportion in the number of public officials who were elected at any governmental level. . . . You could come down to where all of society had to have an actual quota system." Attorney General Smith testified on January 27, 1982 that "quotas would be the end result" and that "the only ultimate logical result would be proportional representation." A number of distinguished legal scholars have separately arrived at much the same conclusion.

The bill itself provides that "the fact that members of a minority group have not been elected in numbers equal to the group's proportion of the population shall not, in and of itself, constitute

* See Walter Berns, "Voting Rights and Wrongs," in last month's COMMENTARY.

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a violation." But all parties agree that an "effects" test in the statute would make it far easier for civil-rights attorneys to prove discrimination and that actual election results, rather than simply electoral arrangements and voter participation, would be factors in subsequent litigation.

This is an authentically difficult issue, for the right to vote is basic; vigorous and successful voter participation by minority groups is the surest and least controversial means of enhancing their power and improving their condition; and it is indeed difficult to prove discriminatory intent in cases such as these. Yet it is also the case that to concentrate on "effects" is to move from equality of opportunity to equality of results; from color-blindness to color-consciousness; from nondiscrimination to something resembling quotas.

As it happens, the renewal of the Voting Rights Act is the first significant civil-rights legislation to move through Congress since the mid-70's. It is the first since *Bakke*, *Weber*, and *Fullilove* sensitized the nation to the issues of quotas, set-asides, preferential treatment, and reverse discrimination. Certainly it is the first since the political and ideological upheaval of 1980. And it entails a major role reversal. For nearly all civil-rights "advances" of recent years have been made by the federal judiciary in partnership with the executive branch, often to the dismay of the Congress. Here we have a markedly different sequence: a traditional definition of discrimination by the Supreme Court followed by a major effort in the Congress to give voting rights a broader construction and to make their violation far easier to prove.

This, then, is a significant event as well as a fundamental issue, and it is regrettable that the Reagan administration dithered and equivocated for so long. It is a shame that the administration's previous policies and actions were so erratic as to call into question both its opposition to quotas and its devotion to nondiscrimination. And it is unfortunate that the present debate over "intent" and "effects" in connection with the Voting Rights Act binds the two issues so tightly. For if hard cases, as the lawyers say, make bad law, so too does a pair of unpalatable options often lead to troublesome policy decisions.

WHITHER civil rights under Ronald Reagan? As with foreign affairs, it seems to depend more than it should on what day it is, who is in charge of a particular decision, what constituency is raising the loudest ruckus, and which agency is responsible for formulating the alternatives and executing the decision. The most ideological administration in recent history seems not to have its ideas sorted out, almost as if it had not realized that avoiding the Orwellian future so lovingly described by the Civil Rights Commission requires a coherent, alternative vision, a steady hand, personnel of unimpeachable character and competence, and the courage to rebuff all who seek governmental sanction for discriminatory practices, whether their intentions are benevolent or malign.

Even within the President's party, and well before the private-school and voting-rights contretemps, Elizabeth Drew reports that "several Republican politicians in Congress and elsewhere—the South included—were troubled by the administration's treatment of blacks. They saw an administration that, in its policies explicitly covering race and in its cutbacks in social programs, appeared to be systematically removing the props from under blacks." At the same time, one hears denunciations of the administration from tough-minded critics on the Right who accuse it of following a pattern of appeasement, muddle-headedness, and business-as-usual.

It is tempting to conclude that an administration that has managed to anger and disappoint its most conservative supporters as well as the most militant of civil-rights activists might be doing something right. But civil rights at home, like human rights abroad, is not a policy domain that takes well to pragmatism, compromise, or vacillation. It demands firm ideas, constancy, and high principle. Else the "angry menagerie" of which George F. Will wrote may grow angrier, and the prospect of reuniting the nation around shared ideals ever more remote.

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AWACS and the Jewish Community

Murray Friedman

When the sale of AWACS jets to Saudi Arabia was narrowly upheld in the Senate on October 28, 1981, the President's victory was widely seen as a major setback for the supposedly powerful "Jewish lobby." Yet the first thing that needs to be observed is that the very definition of the AWACS fight as a test of "Jewish power" reflected—and reflects—a falsified conception.

It was clear, at least at the outset of the controversy, that the proposed sale was unpopular among Americans in general, not just among Jews. According to a survey of editorial comment released on May 8, 1981, 54 of 63 newspapers covering all sections of the United States opposed the deal. With the debacle of Iran just behind us, to say nothing of Vietnam earlier, the idea of providing sophisticated, modern weaponry to a small and inherently weak country that could fall into unfriendly hands was deeply disturbing to many Americans. This was further evidenced in the overwhelming vote in opposition to the sale in the House of Representatives, the branch of government closest to the people. Even in the Senate, and as late as September 17, Senator Robert Packwood was able to muster 51 Senators behind a statement announcing opposition to the sale.

In short, for a majority of Americans the issue was, as it should have remained, what was good for American foreign and military policy; and on the merits, most Americans opposed the sale. But at some point, and through a conscious decision by the Reagan administration, which was otherwise in danger of losing the fight on the merits, the issue was transformed into a question of what was good for Israel and American Jews. The slogan that emerged to symbolize the new conception—"Reagan vs. Begin"—had the further effect of placing the President's prestige on the line, along with the whole question of who controls American foreign policy. This, together with the President's legendary persuasive powers, finally insured passage—albeit even then by a slim margin.

Now that some time has elapsed, other elements of the picture have also fallen into place. Thanks to an exhaustive investigation by Steven Emerson ("The Petrodollar Connection," *New Republic*, February 17, 1982), we can see clearly the extraordinary dimension of the campaign waged by large segments of the American business community on behalf of the AWACS deal. This campaign involved a veritable *Who's Who* of corporations, oil companies, banks, and law firms with business connections and hoped-for business connections in Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich Arab countries.

The campaign to influence Congress on behalf of Arab interests had begun well before the AWACS issue emerged. Federal Election Commission records show that oil-industry contributions to congressional campaigns doubled between 1978 and 1980, to more than $4.5 million. As Harold Scroggins, a lobbyist for the Independent Petroleum Producers Association, explained: "We came to a decision some time ago that the only way we could change the political fortunes of the petroleum industry was to change Congress."

Emerson's detailing of business pressures, "from the top of the Fortune 500 to rice growers in Arkansas," and his description of the intimate involvement of Saudi leaders who came to Washington to work directly with corporate elements—Prince Bandar ibn Sultan, son of the Saudi Defense Minister, was provided with an office off the Senate floor—make grim reading. A month before the vote, for example, Richard M. Hunt, director of government relations for N.L. Industries, a major manufacturer of petroleum equipment and supplies, put together an ad-hoc coalition to lobby for the sale. Among the 40-odd corporations represented were Boeing and the Pratt and Whitney division of United Technologies Corporation, both with a direct stake in the sale (as, respectively, prime contractor and engine builder). The coalition also included such major oil companies as Exxon and Mobil and two international construction firms, Brown & Root and Bechtel, both of which have major interests in the Middle East.

A Midwest Senator told Emerson he was called by every chief executive officer in his state. The week before the vote, Senator Heinz of Pennsylvania, who was in the midst of a reelection effort,

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found himself under enormous pressure from the major industrial corporations in his home town of Pittsburgh; when he failed to vote for the sale, the number of tickets taken by companies for a Heinz fund-raising event fell precipitously.

The campaign went well beyond Congress. In a full-page ad, "A Message Worth Repeating and Repeating," that appeared on October 13 in the New York *Times* and in eleven other major newspapers, Mobil reminded the American people that more than 700 companies in 42 states do "well in excess of $35 billion in contracts" for work with Saudi Arabia, dwarfing the work and contracts involving Aramco and the large American oil companies. The "magnitude and promise of this economic alliance cannot be ignored," Mobil pointed out.

The American Jewish community was clearly not prepared for this assault, undertaken by the administration and the business community together. Jewish agencies had bent their efforts over the years to counteracting the Arab boycott campaign against Israel. Legislation requiring penalties for business cooperation in boycotts represented the fruit of their achievements in this area, and since winning this legislation they have devoted themselves to monitoring compliance. But the fact is that a major new front in the economic war against Jews and Israel has now been opened, in which the most significant feature is blackmail. We are now in a time of severe recession, and many Americans are deeply worried about losing their jobs. When Mobil reminded us of the $35 billion in contracts with Saudi Arabia, or when Boeing, in the course of its AWACS lobbying, threatened to lay off 400 workers if the sale fell through, a new and potent weapon had been introduced into the political arena.

The stakes involved are, indeed, great. With Arab investments in the United States as high as (in one estimate) $200 billion, and Saudi oil profits between now and 1990 estimated as high as $1.69 trillion, it seems obvious that in the coming years the Arabs will be able to buy ever greater quantities of professional expertise and even grassroots support, and to lobby ever more effectively for their interests. A "Washington connection" has already been well established, consisting of the White House, an important group of legislators and former legislators, and other high-level officials now working for the Arabs, as well as Washington news sources. Fred Dutton, the leading Saudi consultant-lobbyist in Washington—and the reputed author of the "Reagan vs. Begin" slogan—is a former aide of President Kennedy and a former Assistant Secretary of State for Congressional Relations; he was recommended to the Saudis by former Senator J. William Fulbright, whose law firm, Hogan and Hartson, is now registered as a foreign agent for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Dutton is also a former associate of Herbert Schmertz, the Mobil executive credited with launching Mobil's AWACS campaign.

II

THE concerted campaign by the administration and important segments of the business community was aided by the development over the past years of a new consensus of political opinion concerning the Middle East conflict. Steven L. Spiegel* has well described the main tenets of this body of opinion, which played a key role in the unfolding AWACS debate; among them are the beliefs "that Saudi Arabia is a moderate force, a country whose wealth and leadership can be relied upon to aid the pursuit of peace; that enhancing the security of the states of the Persian Gulf is a means of insuring energy supplies and also of protecting Western interests; and that the major impediment to a policy based on the foregoing propositions is the Jews of the United States. . . ."

Since the stakes involved are so high, and since, according to the new consensus, Jews stand in the way of their successful pursuit, it is not surprising that in the AWACS fight every tool was used to neutralize the Jewish factor, including anti-Semitism and the threat of anti-Semitism. As the battle heated up, even the right of American Jews to contest the sale became an issue. Senator Alfonse D'Amato of New York, who opposed the sale, placed the blame for this "at the door of corporate and pro-Saudi lobbyists," but it has to be traced more directly to the administration in Washington. The main source of opposition to the sale, it was argued by officials in increasingly less subtle ways, came from an outside power (Israel) and from the American Jewish community, which for these purposes was an extension of that power. The administration leaked a story that Senator Packwood was opposed to the sale only because he could not afford to alienate his wealthy Jewish contributors. Secretary of State Alexander Haig warned of the danger of letting our "independent foreign policy" become hostage to "external veto."

This was all in the nature of preliminaries. In a news conference on October 1, the President himself declared, "It is not the business of other nations to make American foreign policy." Asked if this meant that Israel should "keep her hands off" American national-security matters, he said, "Well, or anyone else." (A *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent noted on October 5, "Nobody had any doubt that Mr. Reagan was addressing Israel and its more zealous partisans in the United States.") Former President Richard Nixon drove the point home a few days later declaring that "if it were not for the intense opposition" of Prime Minister Menachem Begin of Israel and "parts of the American Jewish community," the AWACS sale would "go through."

For the first time since World War II, then, American Jews were being explicitly challenged,

* "The Middle East: A Consensus of Error," COMMENTARY, March 1982.

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not by fringe elements like the Liberty Lobby but by the highest authorities in the land, on their right to involve themselves in an important area of public policy. Few at the time saw fit to raise a comparable question about the intensive lobbying effort of the business community. One who did was Hobart Rowen, who declared in the Washington *Post* on October 8 that the real drive behind the sale was a crass and grubby reach "for the Arab dollar. . . . coupled with the Pentagon's effort to lower the unit cost of the AWACS plane. . . ." Rowen went on: "Yet I do not hear those who profess to worry about the 'divided loyalty' of Americans of Jewish faith—thus churning up anti-Semitism—express concern about a business lobby that puts its dollars-and-cents stake in the Persian Gulf ahead of anything else."

With the legitimation of the charge of dual loyalty, the anti-Semitism normally percolating below the surface was now brought to the fore. It was done in a curious way. Senator Mark Hatfield of Oregon reported a few days prior to the Senate vote that his mail "and my talks with people in my home state" showed that anti-Semitism was definitely on the increase. A number of other Senators also noted that their mail reflected a pick-up in anti-Jewish sentiments. Senator William S. Cohen of Maine, son of an Irish mother and Jewish father, focused this entire issue when he declared that since defeat of the sale would cause a "backlash" against Israel and American Jewry, he had decided to change his previous position and vote for it. In other words, an act which American Jews saw as detrimental to their interests—passage of the AWACS deal—would really, in this interpretation, *protect* their interests, by neutralizing the hostility toward them that was said to be everywhere on the rise in this country.

Aside from the convoluted and self-serving quality of this reasoning, there are grounds for believing that the alleged growth of anti-Jewish feeling, which became so much of an issue shortly before the vote, was considerably overblown. Outside of Washington, a survey of editorial comment indicates, the AWACS sale was discussed on the merits and there was little mention of "dual loyalty," pressure from the Israeli-Jewish lobby, or fears of a rise in anti-Semitism. Senator Hatfield's impressions may have been the exception rather than the norm. A report prepared by Milton Ellerin of the American Jewish Committee, based on discussions with senatorial assistants, found that their offices "did not record any significant increase in anti-Semitic mail even during the intense final weeks of the debate." What mail did come in was in line with what might have been anticipated, and was traceable to efforts of the Liberty Lobby, an organization which is both anti-Israel and anti-Semitic. Before the administration began its final push in the House, not a single representative reported an increase in the anti-Semitic component of his daily mail.

It is true that according to a Gallup poll conducted several weeks *after* the AWACS vote, 53 percent of the public expressed the belief that Israel wields "too much influence" in American foreign policy, but only 10.5 percent felt this way about American Jews (as distinct from Israel), while the percentages of those who believed that Saudi Arabia, the oil companies, and labor unions possess too much influence were 64, 70, and 46 respectively.

There is little reason, then, to believe that the debate changed popular perceptions about the Jews. What may be a problem is the harmful insinuations made at the highest levels of government, which can be more easily repeated when some explosive new issue that seems to involve the Jews arises. Was it just a coincidence that on November 17, 1981, in a heated debate on the floor of the Senate on voluntary prayer in the public schools, Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina referred to Senator Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio as the "Senator from B'nai B'rith"? (He later apologized.) Or that California State Senator John Schmitz, a serious contender for the U.S. Senate, while conducting hearings, referred to a "sea of hard, Jewish, and (arguably) female faces" supporting abortion rights?

III

THE AWACS fight raises the question of the relationship of the Jewish community to American conservatism. There has been considerable discussion in recent years over a Jewish "move to the Right." Jews gave Reagan 39 percent of their vote in 1980, the highest proportion received by a Republican candidate since 1928. Many liked the strong stand he took on national defense and Israel, in contrast to Carter's vacillating position. A number, disenchanted with welfare-state policies that seemed to have run out of control, were attracted by the Reagan promise to reinvigorate the private sector and tap its potential for helping to solve America's social problems.

But even during the 1980 campaign itself, as Wolf Blitzer pointed out in a little-noticed article in the *New Republic*, the Reagan forces had begun to develop the "evenhanded twitch" on Middle East issues that has afflicted almost every President, whether Democrat or Republican, once he gains the Oval Office. Reagan campaign officials resisted efforts by pro-Israel Republicans to incorporate in the Republican party platform his earlier, strong position calling for Israeli sovereignty over Jerusalem. Some of Reagan's most important supporters and advisers, Blitzer wrote, were coming from "gold-plated corporate giants such as Bechtel and Fluor, two California-based construction companies with significant business interests in Saudi Arabia who did not want the Republican nominee to overextend himself on the Middle East." In July 1980, Blitzer asked the

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question many American Jews have been asking themselves since the AWACS fight: "Would Reagan's policy on the Middle East be different from Carter's?"

Reagan's emphasis on the private sector has also proved disappointing. While he has talked a great deal about turning loose the entrepreneurial elements in our society so necessary to economic growth, and primarily the small and medium-sized businesses responsible for generating most of the new jobs in the country, in fact the major beneficiaries of his policies so far have been the corporate giants who pushed so hard for the AWACS sale. The latter differ little from welfare-state bureaucracies in their addiction to the status quo and to a kind of corporate-style socialism.

Moreover, these business interests, and the administration that represents them, have shown that they will always put economic considerations above those of national security, as the recent bail-out of the Polish debt so vividly demonstrates. (In the words of the conservative columnist George F. Will, this seems to be an administration that loves commerce more than it loathes Communism.) Small wonder that such forces should back the sale of AWACS planes to Saudi Arabia, no matter how devastating the potential consequences to our security position in the Middle East.

The role American corporations now have come to play in the formulation of American policy, particularly in the Middle East, is of concern to all Americans, but it has special meaning for Jews. This is not only because of their fears for Israel but also because Jews have so little influence in this particular area of American society. Despite the efforts of the American Jewish Committee and other organizations, Jews have still not been successful in gaining leading positions in the corporate world. In 1981, a recent study shows, the Fortune 500 industrial corporations continue to be headed by Wasps (76 percent) and, to a considerably lesser degree, Roman Catholics (16 percent). The story in banking is even more bleak, with not a single major bank in the country headed by a Jew.

STILL, if the "military-industrial complex" went all out to push the sale of AWACS, this was perhaps to be expected. An *unexpected*, and last-minute, casualty was the Christian Right. Although American Jews have been worried by the growing strength of Christian fundamentalism in American life, they have comforted themselves with the thought that when it comes to Israel, men like the Reverend Jerry Falwell have been staunch. After the bombing of the Iraqi nuclear plant in June, Prime Minister Begin was reassured by Falwell that "God deals with nations in relation to how nations deal with Israel." As late as October 27, Falwell's name appeared on an anti-AWACS ad, but by this time the support expected from this quarter—mail, phone calls, fiery statements—was conspicuously absent.

Simultaneously, there was a defection by conservative Senators normally associated with a strong American foreign policy and with support of Israel—"my boys," as Falwell has called them. One of the most significant of these was Senator Roger W. Jepson of Iowa, a silver-haired, Bible-reading, ex-insurance man who had been perhaps the most vehement opponent of the sale. ("I am a Christian," he told an American Israel Public Affairs banquet in May. "That is why I am for Israel. This sale must and will be stopped.") When the vote came, 26 out of the 28 Senators generally associated with the Christian Right, including Jepson, supported the sale.

Along with the conservative Senators who have normally backed the policies of Israel, such organizations as Young Americans for Freedom, the American Military Retirees Association, Catholics for Christian Political Action, the Conservative Victory Fund, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars joined in a coalition in support of the AWACS sale. The group was put together by Richard Sellers, director of congressional relations for the American Security Council and Washington director of the Coalition for Peace Through Strength. "We created an environment in which it was possible," Sellers later told the Washington *Post*, "for certain key, wavering Senators to change their minds and support the sale or to drop an uncommitted stance and come out behind President Reagan."

If conservatives normally seen as supporters of Israel proved unreliable on the AWACS issue, the liberal-Left did not exactly cover itself with glory either. It is true that the AFL-CIO strongly opposed the sale. And on the whole, liberal Senators were better on the issue than others. Some of them, however, were clearly driven at least as much by the opportunity to embarrass the Reagan administration as by any special commitment to the safety and security of Israel. Earlier in the year, one of the leading Senate liberals, Charles Mathias, Jr. of Maryland, wrote an article for the influential magazine *Foreign Affairs* scoring the "Israel lobby," which acts for "reasons not always related either to personal conviction or careful reflection on the national interest." Representative Paul N. McCloskey, Jr. of California, who achieved fame by his vigorous opposition to the war in Vietnam, told a group of retired naval officers that "we've got to overcome the tendency of the Jewish community in America to control the actions of Congress and force the President and Congress not to be evenhanded" in the Middle East.

The truth is that on Israel, the Jewish community has been badly served by both conservatives and liberals. Perhaps the main lesson to be learned from this is the one applied by Clemenceau to nations—that they do not have permanent allies, only permanent interests.

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IV

THERE was, however, one heartening aspect of the battle over the AWACS, and that was the response of the Jewish community itself. Early in the debate, it became clear that the Israeli government had been largely neutralized by the Reagan administration, which had forced it to stay out of the debate under threat of serious reprisals. At this point the American Jewish community stepped forward on its own. Of special importance was the role of a group of 40 Republican Jewish leaders who had backed Reagan for the Presidency and met now with presidential adviser Ed Meese and with the President himself to argue against the sale.

In the past, Jews in a position of leadership have been ambivalent and sometimes worse when it has come to speaking out on issues of Jewish concern. Not so these men and women. On the eve of the vote, the Jewish Republicans released a sharp public blast at the proposed sale. They were unsuccessful, of course, but as Irving Greenberg has pointed out, their behavior, like the behavior of the Jewish community at large, represented a "historic taking of responsibility" and a "political coming of age." This holds out some hope for the future as well, since it may mean that American Jews will begin to take more initiative on broad issues affecting Jews around the world.

What has happened is that in recent years, a new group of Jewish leaders has emerged in American life. They have come to maturity in the period after World War II. They are comfortable with the idea that there is such a thing as Jewish interests, and they have learned well the lesson that Jews need not be ashamed to fight for those interests—just as blacks, unions, and business groups fight for theirs.

V

THE administration's policy toward Saudi Arabia and the Arab states has hardly changed in the wake of the AWACS fight. Summarizing the nature of Saudi influence in this country, Leslie H. Gelb wrote in the New York *Times* on December 16, 1981 that it no longer resides in the power to supply or deny us oil, but is rather "now bound up in banks, stocks, real-estate, and major international financial institutions . . . [that] inevitably feed into politics." President Reagan expressed the point somewhat differently when he told a group of Jewish leaders who met with him on November 19 that Saudi Arabia "is the key to peace in the Middle East."

But if there is no inclination in Washington at the moment to reconsider policy, this does not mean that those who have alternative views are without recourse. The political process should not be counted out. The President has been buffeted by a decline in his popularity, and Republican strength generally has eroded in recent elections in Virginia and New Jersey. And then there is the politics of pluralism. The electoral importance of the Jews has to be factored into the game plan of the Reagan forces in the coming months.

Still, it would be well to acknowledge candidly the broader currents affecting the Jews, currents over which they have little or no control but which in the final analysis determine their ability to further their own interests in a manner congruent with the national interest properly understood. These have to do with the country's need to face a powerful Soviet adversary in various parts of the globe, our continued dependence on Middle East oil resources, and the economic decline and loss of productivity which have weakened the nation's strength and resolve. Unless real progress is made on these fronts in the coming months and years, no amount of Jewish "power" will be able to effect a meaningful change in American policy toward the Middle East.

Finally it would be well to acknowledge too the *special* interest Jews have in Israel, which is qualitatively different from the interests that Jews have in other areas affecting their welfare. Israel is unique, Nathan Glazer has written, "in that it is not threatened with defeat or the loss of territories or the loss of respect—it is threatened by annihilation, up to, one assumes, the massacre of its inhabitants. . . ." This explains the intensity of American Jewish feeling about Israel, and it also points to the terrible predicament toward which we may be heading. For one can conceive of a scenario, unfortunately the more plausible as this country seeks to draw closer to the Arab states, where the American "national interest" will prevent the United States from doing what may need to be done to insure the survival of Israel.

Glazer has described the difficult position in which this places American Jews. "[A]t a time when Jewish leadership is more unified than ever before, when fewer issues of interest, culture, style, and orientation divide it, when it is more united in spirit—if not in organization—than ever before, one central problem . . . rises up more intensely for Jews than for any other group: how does one defend group interests without affecting —or being seen to affect—adversely the public interest?"

This is the stark dilemma which the dirty fight over the AWACS has posed with excruciating clarity for American Jews.

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Why We Need a Draft

Eliot A. Cohen

WHAT should we make of the All-Volunteer Force? Government officials, be they Republicans or Democrats, and even some officers, assure us that it is working well—that the latest statistics show the services filling their recruiting quotas, that the average enlisted man is as intelligent as ever. They tell us that the Defense Department cannot solve such manpower problems as do exist—the retention of noncommissioned officers, for example—by a return to a draft, but must turn instead to financial and other inducements. Few public men publicly support a reintroduction of the draft, even though President Reagan recently reversed his earlier position by failing to abolish the limited registration initiated by President Carter.

On the other hand, everyone senses that something is wrong. We read stories of tank mechanics who cannot fix turrets, and hear at fourth or fifth hand the grumblings of senior drill sergeants that neither the troops nor their training are what they used to be. When away from TV cameras and promised that their names will not be published, these sergeants, the men who hold the Army together, shake their heads and reminisce fondly about the disgruntled, occasionally insubordinate draftees who fought with them in Vietnam.

The All-Volunteer Force (AVF) was a notion put forward by Richard Nixon in 1969, although it was not fully implemented for several years. It resulted from two developments which occurred during the late 1960's: the wave of popular revulsion against the draft because of Vietnam, and the swelling of the population of young males with the coming of age of the "baby-boom" generation.

Korea had been an unpopular war, but unlike Vietnam the Korean-war draft calls never excited an animus against conscription. Perhaps the reason was that so many of the draftees had older relatives or friends who had fought in World War II or had been recalled for the first year of Korea. In any event, things were different during the Vietnam war, when opposition to the draft went beyond a changing squiggle on public-opinion charts. Hundreds of thousands of young men—primarily the prosperous and well-educated—fled the country, faked illnesses, claimed special exemptions, and otherwise manipulated the cumbersome Selective Service System.

At the same time, it seemed to many both within the government and outside that the draft would be unnecessary in the future. Where in 1965 the total number of young men aged seventeen to twenty was six-and-a-half million, it was projected that the number in 1980 would be over eight-and-a-half million. Already in the 1960's the Army was made up mostly of volunteers. Surely—argued the Gates Commission, appointed by Nixon to study the AVF—moderate pay increases could bring in the additional 75,000 or so enlistments that would, according to their calculations, be needed in the post-Vietnam period.

Two other, more abstract, considerations influenced the Gates commissioners. First, if a draft were to be continued, only a very small proportion of the eligible pool—a quarter or less—would probably be called. The government could not justify, nor would the public tolerate, such unequal burdens. Second, and perhaps more important, the commissioners agreed with the arguments advanced by such men as Milton Friedman and Martin Anderson (until recently a senior economic adviser to President Reagan) that conscription is a tax, not a duty, and a peculiarly inequitable tax at that.

Accordingly, the Gates Commission recommended, and the Nixon administration adopted, the idea of an All-Volunteer Force. No one has been drafted in the United States since 1973.

The AVF, as expected, has cost more than the draft-based armed forces because the pay of first-term soldiers has increased and the government has had to spend hundreds of millions of dollars on recruiting. But the financial burden of the current AVF has not been excessive. The real issue is not the costs of the AVF but its effects on our military capacities and our understanding of the civil burdens of national security.

For the most part the discussion that follows focuses on the Army, for it is the Army that the AVF affects most sharply. The Navy, Marines, and Air Force have traditionally relied primarily on

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volunteers. During Vietnam, for example, the Marines drafted barely 45,000 men, the Navy 2,500 men, the Air Force none at all. To be sure, these services benefited from the draft because many of their enlistees before and during the 1960's were draft-induced—i.e., young men who preferred working with a monkey wrench on a tarmac or in an engine room to carrying an M-16 in a rice paddy. Nonetheless, it is the Army which needs the largest number of men and has the hardest time finding them, and it is the Army which is the ultimate test of the AVF.

THE first question to be addressed in evaluating the AVF is how good the recruits are. For years officials assured the public that the AVF contained fewer Mental Category IV recruits (the lowest level acceptable to the Army) than ever before—that, in fact, such troops made up only 8 percent of the armed forces. Recently, however, the Associate Director for National Security and International Affairs of the Office of Management and Budget has acknowledged that "an error in test evaluation resulted in understating the number of Category IV . . . by a factor of six." In short, 48 percent, not 8 percent, of the Army's recruits are in the lowest of the four acceptable Mental Categories.

This confirms what seasoned NCO's and officers tell questioners in private—namely, that the average recruit is simply not as bright as the draftee of bygone years. Government surveys of professional NCO's and officers have either rejected this opinion as the product of prejudice or tacitly prevented its public expression by paying no heed to the importance of anonymity. Thus, the Defense Manpower Commission in the mid-1970's sent out survey teams composed alternately of a black and a white or a man and a woman and had them question officers directly, rather than by questionnaire. In short order the interviewers noticed a "party line" and seemed surprised that interviewees sometimes anticipated their questions with stock answers. Such sloppy and biased methodology ignored the acute sensitivity of the armed services to even the appearance of divergence from the views of their civilian bosses, and ignored as well the military's mastery of the art of bureaucratic self-protection.

Now that the Mental Category statistics appear unfavorable, defenders of the quality of the AVF point to the high percentage of high-school graduates in the armed forces—65 percent in the Army alone, according to the 1982 report of the Secretary of Defense. The armed services value high-school graduates not for their intelligence or training, but because the ability to complete high school indicates possession of enough self-discipline to succeed in Army life. As educators know all too well, however, a high-school diploma is no longer an indicator of real academic performance, or even of perseverance (well over three-quarters of American youths now complete high school). One also suspects that high-school diploma statistics may be inflated by recruiters under pressure to fill their quotas or by would-be entrants eager to get into the Army.

Moreover, the Army expects to lose approximately a third of its male first-term enlistees before they complete their initial three years of duty—and many of these will be involuntarily separated because of their sheer incapacity. We may also ask why, if the troops are as good as ever, some army manuals are now pitched to the reading levels of those who have not even completed grade school.

One soldier who has disappeared from the ranks in the AVF is the college-educated or partly college-educated man. This group, who once supplied not only the clerks but also the medics and even some of the infantrymen, were occasionally troublesome but more often highly useful to the Army, because of their intelligence, ability to improvise, and, in a pinch, lead. Their disappearance has deprived the Army of a second echelon of potential leaders and doers behind the NCO's.

But what difference does it make if recruits are not as bright as before? True, statistics reveal that more intelligent men do better even at unskilled jobs than their slower comrades, but most slower men *can* be trained if they are willing (and many are) and if the Army provides them with special educational services or recycles them through training. The armed services are, after all, past masters at simple, clear instruction, and much of modern technology actually simplifies the work of front-line soldiers—it is easier to operate and fire an antitank missile than ever it was to operate an antitank gun.

One might as well ask executives why they want intelligent secretaries, when all that such employees need are a few fairly mechanical skills like typing or taking dictation. More to the point, those who assure us that stupid soldiers can make good infantrymen should ask themselves whether, if *they* had to go on a patrol behind enemy lines, knowing that a lapse in alertness, willing cooperation, or initiative could lead to death in a sudden ambush, they would prefer stupid to bright comrades. The dull-witted soldier does not simply get himself killed—he causes the death of others as well.

In war, one's officers or NCO's are often killed or otherwise disabled. The survival of a unit therefore frequently depends on the spontaneous assumption of leadership by intelligent soldiers, no matter how low their official rank. Even in less drastic situations, units need intelligent men, men who can learn enough in advance or on the spot to replace a key member of a team—a tank driver, for example—suddenly incapacitated.

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It is often remarked that the draft can only affect the quality of the lower ranks, not the officers or NCO corps. To the contrary, however, a draft exposes many men to military life who would not otherwise think of making a career out of it. In 1967, for example, some 20 percent of all Army draftees (inductees, not draft-induced volunteers) reenlisted.

The AVF, then, has reduced the overall quality of America's military manpower. To be sure, the smaller services (the Marines, for example) and elite units in the Army (such as the Ranger battalions or the 82nd Airborne Division) still attract intelligent and aggressive soldiers, for there has always been a hard core of volunteers who enjoy soldiering and gravitate to these tough, prestigious units. One cannot, however, fight major wars with elite units alone; great armies are great because of their quality overall.

IN ADDITION to lowering the quality of the Army, reliance on volunteers has (despite the prediction of the Gates Commission) caused a drastic shrinkage in the size of the armed forces, active and reserve. In 1964 (the last pre-Vietnam year) the armed services had 2,685,000 men on active duty—in 1981 they had 2,065,000, 20 percent, or more than half-a-million, fewer. Reservists in organized units numbered 953,000 in 1964, and 30,000 fewer seventeen years later. The current active-duty force of barely two million represents the lowest projection made by the Gates Commission in 1970—the mid-level projection was for a two-and-a-half-million-man force, the high projection for a three-million-man force.

Nor should this shrinkage surprise us. Even when a serviceman's pay is comparable to what he would earn in civilian life, the nature of his work is utterly different. He must subject himself to a discipline and hierarchy which he may find irksome: he may be required to risk or even lose his life at the behest of a twenty-one-year-old second lieutenant newly graduated from college. A sizable proportion of our population, no doubt, has a taste for the military life, and indeed a draft is one of the best ways of finding such men. However, moderate financial rewards will not induce large numbers of average Americans—men who cherish autonomy and independence—to join the colors.

How have defense planners coped with the decline in the size of our forces? In reserve units in particular, civilians are more heavily used than before, but overall the number of civilians hired by the Pentagon has sunk from 1,035,000 in 1964 to 916,000 in 1981. The armed services are understandably reluctant to transfer all support functions to civilians, however, for two good reasons. First, soldiers, unlike civilians, serve under military discipline. In the event of war their superiors can require them to work hard anywhere on earth, under hazardous conditions, for an indefinite period of time; not so civilians. Second, during the course of any prolonged war, armies run short of infantrymen and other combat specialists. The speediest and most effective method of replacing losses is to reequip and retrain service troops and send them into battle.

Another alternative open to the services would have been the reduction of the organizational strength of the armed forces—i.e., the elimination of some of the units currently deployed. As it turned out, the Pentagon took the opposite course. During the mid-1970's the Defense Department decided to deploy 16 Army divisions rather than the 13 then existing; furthermore, agitation by Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia and others forced the conversion of thousands of American service troops in Europe to two more combat brigades.

Why did the Pentagon do this? For one thing, defense planners, alarmed by the steady increase in Soviet strength in Europe and Soviet-bloc activity elsewhere, sought to extract the greatest possible combat power from American resources. A second reason was the conviction on the part of civilian and some military strategists that the U.S. Army had too much tail and too few teeth: the 16-division Army and the two Nunn brigades would, it was hoped, create a leaner, more effective Army.

One may ask whether this was sound reasoning. After all, American forces, unlike their Soviet or German counterparts, must prepare to fight long struggles in remote, occasionally undeveloped theaters of war, and hence need large numbers of service and lines-of-communication troops. For that reason, during World War II the Army could activate only 89 divisions, rather than the 210 planned. This dispute, however, is beside the point. Given the decision to expand the field forces of the U.S. Army, what were the consequences?

DEFENSE planners turned, in the early 1970's, to the "Total Force" concept—that is, the close integration of reserve units into the military machine. Thus, were the President to assemble the Rapid Deployment Force, one out of three of its approximately 300,000 men would be reservists. Four of the Army's divisions consist of two rather than the normal three brigades—they each rely on an additional "roundout" brigade from the National Guard. Other divisions would draw one or two battalions from the reserves and National Guard in order to bring their combat forces up to strength. In addition, the Army as a whole relies on reservists for over two-thirds of its tactical support forces.

This unprecedented reliance on reserve units

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runs counter to Army predilections. Unlike their counterparts in Germany or Israel, our professional officers have historically had little use for this variety of citizen-soldier. There would be nothing wrong with reliance on reservists, however, were adequate financial and human resources devoted to the creation of effective forces like those of Israel or Switzerland, and were the force structure carefully designed to maximize the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of such systems. This, unfortunately, is not the situation in the United States.

The Swiss and Israeli governments mobilize their reservists only for training or when the homeland itself is menaced. In our case, civilians would have to be called up and hastily dispatched to distant theaters of war—the Persian Gulf, for example—even if the crisis were not acute. The necessity of such a call-up would present a President with a formidable political problem (the last major call-up—in 1961, during the Berlin crisis—was extremely unpopular). A President, therefore, might delay mobilization until a late stage in a crisis. Further delays would then ensue because it takes time to assemble reservists and give them refresher training. Thus, forces requiring reserve support would only be readied for war months later than would a self-contained standing force.

There are other military objections to the Total Force concept. The United States, unlike Israel or Switzerland, does not keep its reserve forces at full war strength. Typically, a reserve unit at 100-percent peacetime strength may still be at only 75 percent of its wartime strength. What is the result? During past mobilizations—World War II, Korea, and 1961—units took anywhere from seven months to a year to get ready for overseas deployment. Fillers—conscripts or individual ready reservists (men with a reserve obligation but no local affiliation)—had to be incorporated into units. The whole unit, therefore, had to be retrained in order to absorb the newcomers, particularly if the latter included draftees, and the result was that the unit formed no faster than if it had been made afresh from new conscripts. As General Lesley J. McNair, the architect of American combat forces during World War II, pointed out, training must be progressive: a collection of soldiers, even if they are skilled at their personal tasks, is useless, because war readiness requires team training and practiced cooperation.

The composition of reserve units has changed drastically since the late 1960's. Then the reserves were a haven for those who wanted an honorable way of avoiding service in Vietnam. When the draft ended, so did the pressure on college men to join. Thus, where in 1970 over half the reserves had some college education, today fewer than one in ten do. In the best of circumstances, reservists need to be sharper than their regular counterparts, because they have less time to practice their skills.

To some extent another shift in the composition of the reserves alleviates this problem. Where only one out of three reservists in 1970 had had prior service (beyond basic and advanced training), in 1975 more than two-thirds were in that category. Presumably, reservists who have served for three years or more retain their skills better than those who have served only three months.

On the other hand, the predominance of prior-service personnel poses peculiar problems. A reserve infantry battalion will need just as many buck privates as its regular counterpart, but it is a dull soldier indeed who is still a buck private at the end of a three-year hitch. Moreover, if the Army succeeds in retaining a higher proportion of its soldiers (and that is a laudable goal), fewer soldiers will be available for reserve duty. Finally, reliance on veterans means greater difficulty in matching military specialties with the needs of the reserves, unless prior-service personnel are willing to undergo considerable retraining.

There are other, equally serious, problems in the individual ready reserve (IRR)—the pool of unaffiliated individuals who do not belong to local reserve units with whom they train monthly. For the most part these are men who have completed their active tour and are simply waiting out the remainder of their six-year contract. It is this group that the Army needs to provide replacements for casualties and fillers for understrength units. Leaving aside the problem—a serious one—of how long individual reservists retain their skills after separation from active duty, one confronts the problem of shortfalls in the IRR because of the smaller size of the AVF and the lengthening of tours in it. Mobilization exercises suggest that American units would be several hundred thousand men short in the event of full-scale mobilization. In addition, some critics have cast doubt on the Army's projection that a full 70 percent of these reservists would show up promptly and be suitable for quick reinsertion into units.

Our reserve forces are now receiving more equipment and high-level attention than ever before, and that is all to the good. Nonetheless, the Total Force concept is not a carefully considered product of mature political and military thought. It is, rather, a desperate attempt to plug holes created by the 16-division-plus Army. Ironically, one reason advanced by the then Secretary of Defense, James Schlesinger, in support of the 16-division Army was that it did not seem to him prudent for the United States to rely on its mobilization abilities—including its reserve system—in the event of sudden war.

An intelligent reserve policy can serve a country's military needs well indeed, as the Israeli, Swiss, and German armies have demonstrated. By

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interspersing reserve units with regular ones, however, the United States loses the benefits of both. A standing force, if complete, will get into battle faster and, initially at least, perform better, than a reserve unit. Reserve units, if fully manned and if allowed to draw on the entire male population, can produce cheap and effective forces led by men who have military talent but no taste for a military career. Composite units, however, cost more then reserves, may take as long to mobilize, and probably will not fight as well as standing ones.

THE last measure the armed services have adopted to fill the manpower gaps caused by the AVF has been the wholesale introduction of women into the armed forces. In 1971 less than 2 percent of the armed forces consisted of women; today, more than 8 percent does. (This growth has been even more noticeable in the reserves.) The Women's Army Corps no longer exists. Instead, the Army assigns women to all military specialties save infantry and armor, and there are those who would put an end even to those exclusions.

Why did the services take this step, given that it not only represents a departure from traditional practice, but flies in the face of military procedure in virtually every country—certainly, every major military power—in the world? Israel, for example, well-known for its female soldiers, maintains a separate women's corps (*Chen*) and resolutely keeps women out of all combat-related specialties. Unlike the Americans, the Israelis do not have women driving the supply trucks or building the roads near the front lines, much less serving in field or air-defense artillery batteries. Above all, the Israelis keep their women soldiers as far back as possible from battle zones.

In part, the large-scale incorporation of women into the armed forces was foisted upon the services by social activists in the Pentagon who objected to "sexism" in civilian life and saw no reason to tolerate it in the armed forces. Like Robert McNamara, who forced the services to take "disadvantaged" substandard recruits and educate them ("Project 100,000"), they saw the armed forces as a multipurpose institution—one that should conduct social programs as well as prepare to fight.

The services bear some responsibility as well. Desperate to achieve recruiting goals, they turned to women, who bring higher intelligence on average and present fewer discipline problems (in the sense of rowdiness) than do men. Moreover, some officers, particularly the younger ones, did not escape the influence of the feminist ideology that flourished in the United States during the 1970's.

No putative remedy for the AVF's shortcomings, however, is as fraught with hazard and horror as this one. What will Americans feel when they see on television mangled female corpses on the battlefield; when they welcome home the first female casualties who have had their faces sheared off by shell fragments; or when they read the first reports of the rape of female soldiers and the fates of their infants in prisoner-of-war camps? Such will be the realities of war in the future, for such have been (*mutatis mutandis*) the realities of war in the past.

We must weigh the military implications of the introduction of large numbers of females into the armed forces, and to do this we must remember what war demands of soldiers. Consider, then, the Armistice Day 1942 speech of General McNair, the mild and scholarly commander of the Army ground forces during World War II:

> Our soldiers must have the fighting spirit. If you call that hating our enemies, then we must hate with every fiber of our being. We must lust for battle; our object in life must be to kill; we must scheme and plan day and night to kill. There need be no pangs of conscience, for our enemies have lighted the way to faster, surer, and crueler killing; they are past masters. We must hurry to catch up with them if we are to survive. Since killing is the object of our efforts, the sooner we get in the killing mood, the better and more skillful we shall be when the real test comes. The struggle is for survival—kill or be killed.

To understand the implications of incorporating large numbers of women in the armed forces, substitute the words "American women" for "our soldiers" and "we."

True enough, many (though by no means all) agree that women do not belong in infantry and armor units because they have less physical strength (particularly upper-body strength) and stamina than men. Such formal exclusion from combat, however, means nothing. The troops carrying supplies to the front or repairing blown-out bridges are just as likely to have to fight as infantrymen. A noncombat MOS (military occupational specialty) provides no guarantee against capture, wounds, or death. The Marines have long clung to a sound doctrine, which holds that every Marine is a rifleman first and a specialist second. The 1st Marine Division's epic fighting retreat from the Chosan reservoir in Korea during the winter of 1950-51 succeeded only because the vastly outnumbered Marines could issue rifles to their rear-area troops—the clerks, orderlies, and cooks—and send them *immediately* to hold the line. It is no coincidence that the Marines have fewer women proportionately as well as absolutely than does the Army.

The large-scale introduction of women into the armed forces subverts discipline and morale—not the superficial discipline of the parade ground or the "ice-cream" morale of troops who have unlimited supplies of beer and easy access to dubious entertainments, but the discipline and morale that

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enable men to do their duty despite fatigue and discomfort, despite fear of capture, fear of mutilation, and fear of death. The building blocks of such discipline and morale are intangible. They include fear of disgracing oneself before one's buddies, "machismo," and even hate. The point is that group cohesiveness of this peculiar kind is best fostered in all-male groups, for in mixed groups various extraneous and destructive impulses begin to work—sexual desire or envy, pity, and misogyny among them. If men and women are different, and their differences extend beyond the obvious ones of muscular strength and reproductive capacity, women have no place among America's field troops.

IF THE AVF has damaged the spirit of the American forces, it has hurt the wider population no less by giving credence to a false doctrine of civic duty. The economists who shaped the Gates Commission report devised arcane and improbably mathematical equations to calculate the "tax" imposed by military service. They scoffed at the notion that soldiering was anything but a job—a dangerous one, to be sure, but a job nonetheless, like construction work or lumbering. They defined the manpower problem as a procurement problem like any other—a question of acquiring a fixed quantity of "inputs" at minimum cost.

The economists have ignored Marshal St. Cyr's wise observation that "the laws governing recruitment are political institutions." The proper analogy for military service is not payment of taxes but performance of jury duty. In the case of jury duty, as in the case of the draft, the citizen participates directly in the pursuit of an elevated communal end—in the one, administration of justice, in the other, defense of a civilization and country worth defending. We do not try those accused of crime by jury because that is a cheap or "cost-effective" method; we do so because it befits our society and our self-respect. The economist freely admits that the AVF's success or failure depends largely on the state of the economy—in bad times more men will join, in good times fewer. Would he also subject the rendering of justice to the vagaries of the marketplace?

By calling the draft a tax, the economist misdefines the issue. To be sure, liberal societies are repelled by the undeniable and ineradicable regimentation required by military life. Yet there is another side as well, summed up by Woodrow Wilson in 1919:

> A friend of mine made a very poignant remark to me one day. He said: "Did you ever see a family that hung its son's yardstick on a ledger or spade up over the mantelpiece?" But how many of you have seen the lad's rifle, his musket, hung up! Well, why? A musket is a barbarous thing. The spade and the yardstick and the ledger are the symbols of peace and steady business; why not hang them up? Because they do not represent self-sacrifice. They do not glorify you in the same sense that the musket does, because when you took that musket at the call of your country you risked everything and knew you could not get anything. The most that you could do was to come back alive, but after you came back alive there was a halo about you. . . .

It is ironic that the economist dismisses or ignores the noble aspects of military service and war, for the practical consequence of his policies has been to unfit the Army for the grim and brutal realities it exists to confront.

THE AVF, then, has failed. This being the case, it should be replaced by a draft. But while we need *a* draft, we should not assume that this means the kind of lottery selective draft for two years of service that we had in the past. The reintroduction of that form of conscription would alleviate our short-term problems, but would pave the way for problems in the future. It would appear inequitable, for it would fall upon few of the eligible young men: the draft notice would be a blow of fate, not a universal summons to duty. Public pressure would operate on government to return to an AVF if and when that appeared possible, and some politicians would no doubt succumb to such pressure.

Moreover, as Vietnam demonstrated, it is a grave political and military mistake to use conscripts in the small, dirty wars beyond the European continent that the United States must prepare to fight. Nor, in fact, is it just to force young men to fight wars which cannot, by their nature, receive the wholehearted support of the country, the commitment to a total effort, that distinguished the Civil War and the world wars.

A solution, however, does exist. We can begin by restructuring our reserve forces. A first-line volunteer reserve should be available to the President for sudden expansion of the armed forces at his discretion. States should have their own militias to assist in the preservation of order and to perform the other non-military functions—disaster relief, for example—of the current National Guard. But the Guard itself should be completely federalized: it and the state militias should draw their strength from a draft of all (or almost all) able-bodied young men for a period of training (say, three to six months) plus five or six years of reserve duty. The National Guard—the conscripts, in other words—should only be sent overseas in the event of a declaration of war by Congress.

The active forces should remain volunteer, filled by recruits serving a three-year contract. Undoubtedly, many conscripts would choose to volunteer rather than perform Guard duty: a draft of any kind always leads to voluntary enlistments

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and reenlistments. Thus, a reserve draft would improve the quality of our active forces. Our reserve forces could, for the first time in our history, serve as an effective second line of citizen soldiers, which would be ready for battle more quickly than the citizen armies of the world wars. If we had many such divisions, fully manned, equipped, and well-trained, we might even be able to return to a 13- or 14-division Army.

The notion of military obligation embodied in such a plan would fit our liberal institutions. The form of military service would be, essentially, that of colonial and early-American militia duty—an obligation for training and actual service in time of grave national peril. It would be equitable, because most young men would serve—particularly the sons of the middle and upper classes. It is a system proposed by George Washington and Alexander Hamilton, Theodore Roosevelt and (in a slightly different form) Harry Truman. It would be expensive, perhaps, but savings could be made in recruiting budgets and first-year pay for volunteers. Such a system has hardly reduced Switzerland or the Scandinavian countries to penury.

The alternative of national service—offered primarily by those who see the need for a military draft, but cannot bring themselves to advocate one publicly—is at once impractical and undesirable. Impractical, because national service—which would probably include women—would require the placement of vast numbers of discontented, underpaid youngsters in makework jobs throughout the country. It would be undesirable because it would transform the idea of an obligation to prepare for the defense of one's country into one of *corvée*—forced labor for the state.

An all-volunteer force was compatible with American institutions and needs in the days when our role in world politics was small, our commitments negligible. Such is not the case today when our Navy sails the globe, when over a third of a million of our soldiers and airmen guard our European and Asian allies, and when almost as many are being prepared to fight in the Persian Gulf. To repudiate conscription under these circumstances is not merely to embrace a false notion of obligations and rights—it is to risk humiliation, needless loss of life, and perhaps catastrophe.

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The Problem of Christian Anti-Semitism

Norman Ravitch

A THEOLOGICAL revolution has been taking place within Christendom in the last generation which has largely remained unknown to Christian believers specifically and to the educated public generally. Like the proverbial poor Greeks who survive by taking in one another's wash, theologians and scholars in religious studies write primarily for one another; seldom does the import of their labors have any effect on the consciousness of Christian believers or on the wider educated public. Yet the recent revolution in the study of Christianity is a profound one which may one day be a source of considerable surprise, consternation, and perhaps of upheaval.

Theology is a peculiar intellectual activity and one off-limits to many in our secular society. It is also difficult to predict what, if any, impact theological revolutions or insurrections may have more widely. The much discussed "death-of-God" movement has probably run its course, at least in the form it characteristically took. So it is also hazardous to predict the results of a newer and wider theological upheaval centering on the Christian interpretation of Judaism and the Jewish people. But one may expect that anything having to do with the "Jewish Question" will, at least in the West, have some impact. The recent and still ongoing debate among theologians and other scholars over Christian anti-Semitism and anti-Judaism should be more widely known and understood.

According to the leading participants in this reassessment of Christian-Jewish relations, two events, closely related, have led to the theological revolution: the attempt, albeit somewhat belated, to assimilate the meaning of the genocide of European Jews during what the Germans often call "*die Hitlerzeit*"; and the subsequent establishment of the state of Israel in the contemporary Middle East.

One might indeed expect these events, particularly the first, to have compelled all religious teachings to undergo considerable reevaluation. The work of the Second Vatican Council (1962) demonstrated both the need for such reevaluation of the Christian-Jewish nexus and the difficulties involved. Much less publicly known efforts on the part of national and international Protestant authorities have demonstrated the same imperatives and the same obstacles. If the response of the Christian churches has been slower than that of other institutions and of secular learning, it has nonetheless begun.

The chief issue may be oversimplified in this way: does the murder of millions of Jews by ex-Christian Nazis and the passive acquiescence of millions of Christians and ex-Christians have any source in the Christian theological teaching about the Jewish people during the last two millennia? Does the restoration of a Jewish political state have any meaning in the Christian interpretation of world history? Since the Jewish people have always occupied the "secret center" of world history for many Christians, it is reasonable to expect an answer to these questions. But it is not easy to know what sort of answer to give.

Perhaps the most interesting and most audacious answer proposed is the one by Rosemary Radford Ruether in her 1974 book, *Faith and Fratricide: The Theological Roots of Anti-Semitism*. While Mrs. Ruether's book is but one of several on this general subject in the last generation, it has the advantage of posing the major issues in the Christian-Jewish nexus so clearly and so provocatively that it serves admirably as "the text" for an assessment of what Christian theologians are struggling over and where they may be heading.

The best place to start a discussion of Mrs. Ruether's thesis about the disastrous Christian maligning of the Jewish people is with Father Gregory Baum, who wrote an introspective introduction to her book. Father Baum was, in the 1960's, the author of a book designed to deny the still somewhat "underground" allegation that the New Testament was anti-Semitic. In his book he had acquitted the New Testament of such charges with a conventional defense of Christianity as a religion of love. The poignancy in the situation is that by the time Rosemary Ruether completed her *Faith and Fratricide*, Father Baum had been shaken to his very depths by the theological revolution over the Christian-Jewish nexus and was now willing publicly to write that he had

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been mistaken. Simply put, he was now convinced by Mrs. Ruether and her fellow theological revolutionaries that anti-Semitism was as native to Christianity as mother's milk to a new-born babe.

What was it that so struck Father Baum, an accomplished biblical scholar and theologian in his own right, about the revelations of Rosemary Ruether? What in the Christian tradition had he failed to recognize after years of study as the primary source of anti-Semitic sentiment and the primary incitement to hatred and persecution? It was simply this conclusion he drew from Mrs. Ruether's investigation: despite the Second Vatican Council's good will toward the Jews and its willingness to search into its Scripture for a positive assessment of the Jewish people,

> what Paul and the entire Christian tradition taught is unmistakably negative: the religion of Israel is now superseded, the Torah abrogated, the promises fulfilled in the Christian Church, the Jews struck with blindness, and whatever remains of the election of Israel rests as a burden upon them in the present age.

This primary, negative assessment of the Jewish people, which Mrs. Ruether and Father Baum find embedded in the earliest Christian writings, stems from the basic view of the earliest Christians that the Jews' reading of their own Holy Scriptures, the so-called "Old" Testament, was erroneous. The collective Jewish refusal to see, in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ who was foretold in the Hebrew Scriptures, convinced the authors of the New Testament that the Jewish people were blind, had probably always been blind, to the demands of their God, who thereupon abandoned them for His new covenanted people, the membership of the Church of Christ. Indeed, the unbelieving Jews, the *"perfidi judaei"* of the medieval liturgy, were an ongoing threat to the legitimate identity of the infant Christian community. Hostility to the Jewish people, writes Mrs. Ruether, is nothing less than a grim necessity for Christian existence:

> The anti-Judaic tradition in Christianity grew as a negative and alienated expression of a need to legitimate its revelation in Jewish terms.... It continues on in the Church Fathers, and even to this day, as an ongoing expression of this same need by the Church to legitimate its Christological midrash by insisting that this actually represents the true meaning of the Jewish Scriptures and is the divinely intended fulfillment of Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets. It is not enough for the Christian tradition to hold this opinion. . . . As long as "the Jews," that is, the Jewish religious tradition itself, continues to reject this interpretation, the validity of the Christian view is in question.

All the hatred and persecution of the Jewish people Mrs. Ruether finds explicated by this need to make the Jews finally admit that the Church is right and they wrong about the coming of the savior foretold in the Scriptures. A suffering Israel is needed by the Church for its own self-understanding and justification.

Nor is Mrs. Ruether especially sanguine about moving the Christian Church toward a more positive view of the Jewish people. "Possibly," she writes, "anti-Judaism is too deeply embedded in the foundations of Christianity to be rooted out entirely without destroying the whole structure." What she feels she can offer is the suggestion of a more "Jewish" view of the present age as one of "unfulfilled" rather than "fulfilled" messianism. Such an accommodation, she believes, could give the various world religions, and especially Judaism, a place for valid existence until the Second Coming institutes the true messianic age. The Jewish "No" to Christian messianic claims is thus useful in restraining Christians from the false perception that redemption has already come.

Those familiar with the Christian-Jewish nexus will recognize here the general Jewish apologia for not recognizing in Jesus the Christ and more specifically that of Franz Rosenzweig, the German-Jewish theologian, for whom Jesus had come as the messiah *only* for the Gentiles. It would not be too much to say that Rosemary Ruether's sympathy with the Jewish plight has brought her around to a Jewish view of the messianic question. Indeed, some of her critics accuse her precisely of the venerable error of "Judaizing."[1]

As for the second challenge to Christianity in the post-1945 era, the establishment of the state of Israel, Mrs. Ruether disposes of it rather briefly. She sees the restoration of Jewish statehood as requiring the abandonment of yet another Christian myth about the Jewish people—their condemnation to exile until they acknowledge their error and accept the once rejected Christ. Her treatment here is necessarily lame, for while the state of Israel does end the curse of exile for Jews who choose to become its citizens, Jews themselves have questioned the messianic meaning of statehood, and peace remains as elusive for Jews in Israel as in the Diaspora. The insecurities of contemporary Israeli life externally and the state's internal problems and contradictions do not offer much obvious encouragement to any radical revision of Christian attitudes. Indeed, some might actually choose to see in the external and internal problems of the state of Israel a reflection less of

[1] See, for example, James Hitchcock, *Catholicism and Modernity: Confrontation or Capitulation* (1979); John M. Oesterreicher, *Anatomy of Contempt: A Critique of R.R. Ruether's "Faith and Fratricide"* (1975); and Thomas A. Indinopulos and Roy Bowen Ward, "Is Christology Inherently Anti-Semitic? A Critical View of Rosemary Ruether's *Faith and Fratricide*," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. XLV, No. 2 (1977).

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Jewish redemption than of continuing unredeemedness.

But this discussion necessarily must await future developments in the Middle East. In the meantime, the experience of genocide remains a much more important motive for Christian reevaluation of the "Jewish Question."

CENTRAL to Rosemary Ruether's identification of the roots of theological anti-Semitism is the Christian appropriation of the Jewish covenantal relationship to God, the Lord of history. This is no mere accident. It is well known that the nascent Palestinian Church of the 1st century and the Jewish religious authorities were missionary rivals among the Jewish masses and pagan sympathizers. It has not always been realized, however, that the Church and the Synagogue remained rivals in the quest for souls for many centuries—according to one respected French scholar, Marcel Simon, well into the late 4th century. It was only the Christian Roman empire and the Muslim caliphate which put an end to the missionary work of Judaism.[2]

But Jews and Christians were not merely rivals, as Christians and the followers of Mani might be. For Jews and Christians, as Paul van Buren has written,

> hostility was mutual and understandable. Two groups appealing to the same tradition could understandably, if regrettably, see themselves as rivals and competitors, regarding each other as apostates from the truth and wanderers from the way of the One God of whom they both claimed to be beloved.[3]

Christians and Jews read the same Scriptures, but differently. For the Jews, for whom the messiah had not yet come, the Scriptures revealed the basic faithfulness of Israel who, though chastened and downcast, still waited for redemption with legitimate hope. For the Christians, however, the Scriptures pointed to Jesus as the messiah. The Jewish failure to recognize him accounted for and justified all the dashed hopes of the Jews, from the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. through the defeat in the Second Jewish War under Hadrian to the final degradation of a people blinded in its rejection of the savior. To the Jews were then left only a Scripture and tradition they failed to understand, a system of law which they turned into an arid legalism without spirit, and an exile appropriate to their disobedience and rejection by God.

While some early Christians, associated with the great heresiarch Marcion, advocated the complete abandonment of the "Old" Testament (a perennial temptation of Christians exasperated with the "Jewish Question"), the "orthodox" Church finally decreed total acceptance of the Old Testament read in a corrected Christian "midrash" or interpretation. But even those in the Church who battled on behalf of retaining the Hebrew Scriptures tended to regard the Jews as having always misunderstood their own history and sacred traditions. Thus, even in revering the Old Testament, the Church was generally inclined to a semi-gnostic repudiation of much of it and certainly of its people. Once Israel had rejected the Christ, the election of Israel became, for Christians, the accursedness of the Jewish people. Although remaining the "secret center" of all world history, Israel in this interpretation had been chosen not for faith and covenant, but for blindness and disobedience. In these traits the Jews remained of permanent significance for Christian theology.

The Christian appropriation of the Scriptures and biblical history meant that the traditional prophetic way of explicating historical events as the work of the Lord of history could be used for Christian edification only at the price of excoriating the Jewish people. The prophets of Israel had developed a particular way of dealing with the political fortunes of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Disaster was rarely explained in the light of the superior political or military power of Egypt, Assyria, or Babylon. Rather, foreign invasions were interpreted as divine warnings about Israelite moral shortcomings or as punishments. The genius of the prophetic interpretation of history was in enabling the people to endure hardship and disaster and in purging society periodically of injustice and immorality. Its danger was that it rationalized as the will of God even the most hateful of political and social reverses. A recent Jewish writer on the lessons of Auschwitz, Richard L. Rubenstein, rejects the prophetic interpretation of history because it could be used even to explain the genocide of six million Jews. The early Christians, however, were less squeamish than Professor Rubenstein; the logic of the prophetic tradition led them to see in the various Jewish catastrophes of the 1st and 2nd centuries the hand of an avenging God.

IN THE aftermath of the Jewish defeat in 70 C.E., various observers offered different explanations. For the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, and the Romans whose imperial mission he flattered, it was God who had condemned the Jews to catastrophic defeat, thereby proclaiming His favoring of the Romans. Jewish nationalists, Jewish apocalyptics, and Jewish Christians, though they might dispute the exact sin which lay at the heart of the Jewish defeat, all agreed that Israel *had* sinned and was brought low as a result. The rabbis too saw in the defeat the

[2] *Verus Israel* (Paris, 1964) and, with André Benoit, *Le Judaïsme et le Christianisme antique d' Antiochus Epiphane à Constantin* (Paris, 1968).

[3] *Discerning the Way: A Theology of the Jewish Christian Reality* (1980).

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sin of Israel, although they were also inclined to search for a more positive message. For them the end of the Temple proclaimed the primacy of the Torah, the law, over the sacrificial cult.

For the growing Church, the fall of the Holy City was at first regarded as preparatory to the Second Coming of Christ—in the words of the Book of Acts, "to restore the Kingdom to Israel"; but the second Jewish defeat, in 135, confirmed the judgment of God on an unrepentant old Israel. The failure of apocalyptic expectations and the gradual normalization of Christian life worked to reinforce this view of the Jewish defeat as signifying the punishment of Israel by God.

It must have seemed diabolical to the rabbis that the Christians turned traditional Jewish weapons against them. For the classic Christian teaching about the reprobation of Israel came almost entirely from Jewish tradition. As the Jewish scholar Irving Greenberg has recently written:

> Although the mainstream of Jews did not accept their conclusion, the Hebrew Christians were "thinking Jewish" when they interpreted [the destruction of the Temple and the failed Bar Kochba rebellion of 132-35] as being normative events with a religious message. These events confirmed the analysis—or even originated the analysis—that the old channel of salvation was stopped up and that a new channel was the valid one. It followed that a new people of God had been born. From there to the punishment and rejection theory of Jewish exile is not a big jump. Ironically enough, every step of this development had followed Jewish models and categories even if the net result was a repudiation of Judaism.[4]

While the Church increasingly proclaimed the reprobation of Israel, the rabbis gave no direct reply. They admitted that suffering stemmed from sin, but they steadfastly refused to accept the Church's view. In many respects Jewish life in the Roman empire became more favorable after the final defeat of the Jewish nationalists, and there was no perceived need for the rabbis to put the destruction of the Temple into so central a role as did the Christian apologists. It was only with the establishment of Christianity as the imperial cult that the Jewish position began to deteriorate; in the non-Roman world, the Jews did not perceive their unfavorable situation clearly until the rise of Islam in the Babylonian heartland. Thus, the discussion of the woes of Israel was long a Christian, but not a Jewish, imperative.

As a normative part of Christian theology, the Christian view of Jewish defeat never lost its persuasiveness. It quite serviceably explained the mystery of Israel and became a motive for cooperating with Providence by making Jewish existence as precarious as possible. In persecuting Jews one could believe oneself in close cooperation with God's will and judgment. The Jews and Judaism became an integral part of salvation history, with Manichean dimensions. The Jews became a necessity for Christians, who took care to moderate persecution just enough to permit the Jews to survive in an appropriately debased condition. Christendom could hardly do without the Jews in its midst—or at least, not yet.

IF THE Christian appropriation of the Jewish Scriptures and of the Jewish philosophy of history was indeed responsible for the demonic role ascribed to the Jewish people, one might wonder if this was inevitable. Did the Christian Church, despite its missionary rivalry with the Synagogue in the Roman empire, have any alternative?

In fact, as was mentioned earlier, there were movements within early Christianity which denied the fatal link with Jewish salvation history, sought to abandon the Old Testament, and viewed Jesus as a redeemer figure more consonant with Hellenistic mystery religions. These movements were associated, in a rather confused way, with the various gnostic sects and with the figure of Marcion of Pontus (*c.* 100–*c.* 160). Marcion sought to go much further than Paul in freeing the new covenanted people from any connection with the Jewish people. Although Marcion was eventually condemned as heretical, Marcionite and gnostic tendencies survived within Christianity. One German scholar, Walter Bauer, writes that much of even earliest Christianity, particularly in Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, had been Marcionite and gnostic *before* it became orthodox; that is, for many Christians in the Hellenistic East, Jesus was from the beginning seen as a mystical savior and not the flesh-and-blood Promised One of Israel.

For the Church to accept the Old Testament as authoritative gained for it many obvious advantages: Christianity could claim the venerable antiquity of Jewish history and wisdom in an age respectful of antiquity; Jesus as a human being born to a historical nation was preferable to the unhistorical savior-gods of Hellenistic and Oriental mythology. The danger, on the other hand, was that the Old Testament did not unequivocally foresee the type of savior that Christians believed Jesus to be. Christianity was, therefore, always in danger of lapsing into a type of Judaism. A forthright rejection of Jewish history and prophecy and Jewish claims would free the Church from an unpopular ethnic identification and an equivocal national history—from a people found everywhere in the Greco-Roman world but nowhere wholly of that world. A Marcionite or gnostic Christianity, whether arising independently of the Great Church or in opposition to it,

[4] "New Revelations and New Patterns in the Relationship of Judaism and Christianity," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Vol. XVI, No. 2 (Spring 1979).

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offered many temptations to early Christians, and it continues to do so in the modern world.

When the Great Church finally decided to do battle against the gnostics and Marcionites, what was involved was a twofold process. The Old Testament, the Creator God, and the whole Jewish religious tradition had to be defended with vigor, while at the same time the Christian faith had to be clearly explained as something other than, something better than, the religion of the Jews. The defense against the "heretics" in the theological works of Tertullian, the great North African Latin churchman of the 3rd century, demonstrates that the Church could only do its job by simultaneously exalting the Jews of the Old Testament and berating the Jews of the contemporary age. The Church's insistence on maintaining the connection with the Jewish Scriptures fatally and necessarily led it to attack the living people of Israel.

The adoption and adaptation of Jewish Scriptures, Jewish synagogue practice and rituals, and Jewish ideas as weapons against the heretics also required a vigilant defense against Christians who would go further into "Judaizing." The most anti-Jewish writers and preachers of the Church—the originators of the venerable *Adversus Judaeos* tradition—were those who were most hotly engaged on the front lines in the struggle against heretics on the one hand and Judaizers on the other—and all to prove that the Church was the True Israel. St. John Chrysostom, probably the most inspired arch Jew-baiter of the ancient Christian world, was but the most famous of many. As the historian Jaroslav Pelikan has observed, "Virtually every major Christian writer of the first five centuries either composed a treatise in opposition to Judaism or made this issue a dominant theme in a treatise devoted to some other subject."[5]

Ironically, while the Marcionites rejected the Old Testament, this did not automatically make them anti-Semitic in the way the Great Church was anti-Semitic. Marcion agreed with the rabbis that the Old Testament was valid for Jews, that they read it correctly, that its history was reliable, and that its moral code was appropriate to its purpose. He also agreed that the Old Testament did not foretell the coming of the messiah in Jesus of Nazareth. In wanting to organize Christian faith along purely Hellenistic lines, in having no room for a Jewish "center" of world history, Marcionism might indeed have left the Jews alone as another irrelevant religious sect in the great religious cauldron of the Middle East, a sect wholly alien to the Christian Church. Conflict is always keener when antagonists recognize their common ancestry and their close relations.

IT SEEMS clear, then, that the close family relationship of Christianity to Judaism, the very Christian-Jewish nexus, is indeed responsible *au fond* for the negative reading of Jewish history among Christians. The great philosopher of history in our century, Arnold Toynbee, has been the target of several bitter attacks from Jewish scholars for his biases, at once Christian, Hellenist, and universalist, against the Jews and their parochialism; yet a more careful reading of Toynbee reveals an honesty and clarity rarely achieved elsewhere:

> Israel, Judah, the Jews, and Judaism did not play major parts in the history of mankind before they gave birth to the two "deviationist" Judaic world-religions. If Christianity and Islam had never been generated by Judaism's involuntary but undeniable paternity, Judaism would be surviving today in an environment of Hellenic "paganism," as Zoroastrianism does survive today in an environment of Hindu "paganism." We may guess that, in that event, the Jews' position in the world today would have been more like the actual position of the Parsees than like the actual position of the Jews themselves. The Jews would have been more obscure than they now are, but they would also have been more comfortable. The Jews' present-day importance, celebrity, and discomfort all derive from the historic fact that they have involuntarily begotten two Judaic world-religions whose millions of adherents make the preposterous but redoubtable claim to have superseded the Jews, by the Jewish god Yahweh's dispensation, in the role of being this One True God's "Chosen People."

Toynbee, far from being insensitive to Jewish concerns, willingly admitted the permanent value of Jewish life and faith and even suggested that the splits between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam were unfortunate religious "schisms." In addition, Toynbee admitted the presence of anti-Semitism within the Gospels themselves, the internal Jewish debate about the new Jewish-Christian community leading to polemical excesses which, in the hands of Gentiles, created a demonic role for the non-believing Jews. Toynbee suggested that Muslim attitudes toward the Jews lacked this particular animus because Muslims did not make dogmas out of the polemical tradition in Matthew and John.

It is too much, according to Alan T. Davies, a leading scholar of Christian anti-Semitism, to expect ordinary Christians to understand in the originally non-anti-Semitic way the negative images of the Jews in key portions of the New Testament. Believers hear and accept the New Testament's negative evaluation of Jews literally, while theologians and scholars within the Christian tradition are particularly prone to the "danger . . . of superimposing extra-historical meanings on historical events that the facts *in puris naturalibus*

[5] *The Christian Tradition, Vol. I: The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)* (1971).

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cannot possibly justify."[6] Davies cites Berdyaev's view that when religious insights become dogmas, anti-Semitism cannot be far behind. For Davies, only a "daring and heretical, and a true theological response to the post-Auschwitz situation" can free Church tradition from its inherent denigration of the Jewish people:

> Auschwitz has altered the criteria of theology forever. The beliefs and doctrines of Christianity must be weighed not solely for their inner logic, but immeasurably more for their human ramifications. Never again, one trusts, will the church dogmatize abstractly about human themes without pre-testing its conclusions in the crucible of the flesh-and-blood world. . . .

Davies is particularly effective in cataloguing the weaknesses of Catholic and Protestant authors who sincerely have sought to defend the Jewish people against the more damning assessments from Christian tradition. The sympathy of Jacques Maritain, Jean Daniélou, and Augustin Cardinal Bea cannot effect a rethinking of the "Jewish Question," for all these Catholic defenders of the Jews fall into the theologization of history, which cannot free the Jews from their unenviable status; nor is the charity these writers preach able to defeat ingrained hostility to the Jews. Protestant biblicism may be even more damaging to the Jews, according to Davies, than Catholic traditionalism, for traditionalism at least theoretically allows for evolutionary change in doctrine, while fundamentalism is mired in rigid dogmatism. Karl Barth himself wrote more about "theological" Jews than about living members of the community of Israel. Davies finds hope only perhaps in a liberal Protestantism hardy enough to rethink Church traditions, and he seems to favor an approach to the Christian-Jewish nexus similar to that of Franz Rosenzweig.

ESPECIALLY interesting in the Protestant camp is Reinhold Niebuhr, whose positive attitude toward living Jews was well known. Still, adhering as he did to a basically traditional Protestant theology, Niebuhr could theoretically express a rather unsympathetic assessment of the Jews while being willing to concede that actual Jewish behavior might be morally superior to Christian behavior. For all his personal good will, Niebuhr's general theological position required a certain denigration of Judaism:

> . . . In modern Judaism there are both legalistic and mystical tendencies but no strong forward-looking historical tendencies. The sense of history expresses itself retrospectively. In modern Jewish life messianic and apocalyptic tendencies, still surviving in the ethos of Hebraism, have been forced to find expression in secularized versions of messianism, such as the liberal idea of progress and Marxism or in slightly heterodox movements such as Hasidism. Christianity appropriated the prophetic messianic tradition. . . .[7]

Is Niebuhr's exposition not an elegant way of expressing the old tradition? Israel's mission is over, it is blind in its non-belief, its arid pursuit of the Law is of no avail.

Can a Christian believe anything different? Alan Davies insists that Christians can indeed regard Judaism positively without abandoning any "genuine Christian tenet," yet the evidence documents how difficult indeed this has been even for the most irenic of Christians. In the last analysis, Toynbee speaks for almost all Christians and ex-Christians when he finds the universalist vision of the Jewish prophets fulfilled in the Christian dispensation, with modern Judaism reduced to a narrow segregation of the biblical faith.

But can one legitimately view Judaism as parochial and narrow, short of having fallen victim to traditional Christian misrepresentation? Some historians have indeed done so. Thus, a respected historian of antiquity, Martin Hengel, finds the deepest tragedy of the Jews squarely in what the rabbis chose as their highest task: the defense of the Torah and the separateness of Israel. According to Hengel, the failure of the radical Hellenizers among Jews and pagans in the 2nd century B.C.E.—that is, the victory of the Maccabees which Jews celebrate in the festival of Hanukkah—turned Judaism into exclusive, segregated channels. It also turned the pagan world toward a negative assessment of Judaism and the Jews. Hengel holds that the theological criticism of cult and law, from the second century B.C.E. on, was governed by the experience of radical Hellenization attempted under Antiochus Epiphanes:

> Here is the profound tragedy of the reaction of Judaism to the primitive Christian movement which developed in its midst. Jesus of Nazareth, Stephen, Paul came to grief among their own people because the Jews were no longer in a position to bring about a creative, self-critical transformation of the piety of the law with its strongly national and political coloring. . . . The apologetically rigidified understanding of the Torah, which no longer measures up to the message of the prophets, was irreconcilable at that time with the universal eschatological claim of the gospel, and had to be broken.[8]

That Judaism did become a defense of Torah and people can hardly be doubted, although Hengel's identification of this trend in the Maccabean period can be contested. While the early Christian diatribes against Judaism unquestionably painted

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[6] *Anti-Semitism and the Christian Mind* (1969).

[7] *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1964). See also Niebuhr's "The Relations of Christians and Jews in Western Civilization," in *Pious and Secular America* (1958).

[8] *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine During the Early Hellenistic Period* (1974).

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a very tendentious picture, under the pressure of exile and Christian and Muslim hostility, Judaism indeed came to segregate itself from the wider environment. But can this inward movement really be found as early as the Maccabees, or even earlier with the return from Babylonian exile?

Marcel Simon's central thesis about the antagonism between Church and Synagogue is based on a totally different evaluation of Judaism in the Roman empire. According to Simon, it was the vigor of Judaism, its cultural accomplishments, its missionary successes, and its manifest attractions for both Christians and pagans which forced the Church into taking hostile defensive measures under the governmental authority of the Christianized empire. Religious competition between Church and Synagogue during the first four centuries of the Christian era was intense, and this rivalry explains better than any other factor the virulence of Christian anti-Semitism. Whatever nativism we may see in the Maccabean movement, it took half a millennium for Judaism to become relegated to a marginal role in world history.

SCHOLARS are engaged in a never-ending and finally unresolvable dispute about the relative importance of pagan anti-Semitism in the Greco-Roman world compared to the anti-Semitic theology of the emergent Church. It is almost impossible to decide whether Christian anti-Semitism was merely a legacy from the ancient world given a new theological gloss or whether Christian teaching developed a virulence rarely found in the pagan world. Those desiring especially to place the responsibility squarely on Christian teaching, Rosemary Ruether and her famous predecessor Jules Isaac being examples, tend naturally to regard pagan anti-Semitism as an occasional expression of wonder and distaste at the unique features of Jewish life—a reaction tempered always by considerable philo-Semitism among large segments of pagan society. Those, on the other hand, who wish to exculpate the Church from the horrible fruits of anti-Semitism point instead to the virulence of anti-Semitism among Greeks, Egyptians, and other ancient Orientals.

One can, at least with some assurance, hold that the unique religious and social life of the Jews of antiquity did arouse both sympathetic wonder and troubled suspicions among non-Jews, whether pagan or Christian. Undoubtedly the introduction of Christian perspectives into the already troubled awareness of Greco-Roman paganism, and the Christianization of the Roman empire, contributed to the development of the particularly acute anti-Semitism henceforth characteristic of the Christian and European West. It is instructive to note that when Christianity penetrated beyond the borders of the Christian Roman empire, no Eastern counterpart of virulent state-enforced theological anti-Semitism developed. In his study of a 4th-century Christian bishop in the Persian empire, Jacob Neusner expresses considerable wonderment:

> What is striking is the utter absence of anti-Semitism from Aphrahat's thought. While much provoked, he exhibits scarcely a trace of the pervasive hatred of "the Jews" characteristic of the Greek-speaking churches of the Roman Orient, indeed of his near-contemporary John Chrysostom. On the contrary, Aphrahat conducts the debate through penetrating criticism, never vilification. Though hard-pressed, he throughout maintains an attitude of respect. He must be regarded as the example of the shape Christianity might have taken had it been formed in the Semitic-Iranian Orient, a region quite free of the legacy of pagan Greco-Roman anti-Semitism.[9]

Was this different Christian-Jewish nexus due to the different linguistic and cultural environment in Persia, as Neusner implies? Or was it the minority status of Iranian Christianity which did not afford it the means to vilify the large Jewish community in its midst? Was it Constantinian triumphalism which gave to Roman Christianity its intolerance and virulence? There is no generally accepted resolution of this problem. One can only proffer the suggestion that the marriage of Christian denigration of the Jewish people with imperial authority finally brought the Jewish people and Judaism low.[10]

ALAN DAVIES, among others, has noted the dangers and pitfalls in theologizing history. The Jewish people have fared very badly as the "secret center" of Christian history and theology. Impartial historical study, including biblical scholarship, might be expected to correct theological excesses, but no less a figure than Arnold Toynbee admitted the burden of the Christian *Weltanschauung* upon the work of Western scholars, and the very possibility of a value-free historiography has generally been exploded as naive optimism or ideological concealment. What has historical scholarship, more particularly biblical scholarship, contributed to an

[9] *Aphrahat and Judaism: The Christian-Jewish Argument in Fourth-Century Iran* (1971).

[10] Marcel Simon does not let the modern consequences of anti-Semitism soften what he regards as the judgment of an "impartial historian." The Church's polemic against the Jews was as legitimate a means of self-defense as the arguments of one Christian sect against another, he contends. Hatred between Jews and Christians was intense and mutual. The rabbis did not then share the view of modern liberal Jews that Christianity was an appropriate form of monotheism for the conversion of pagan man. For the ancient rabbis, Christianity was the enemy. The Jews merely lacked the means and the opportunity of persecuting Christians.

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understanding of the Christian-Jewish nexus and Christian anti-Semitism?

An exceedingly combative Jewish observer of Christian biblical scholarship, Hyam Maccoby, takes a dim view of biblical studies. Himself the author of a very polemical book on Jesus as a political revolutionary, *Revolution in Judaea: Jesus and the Jewish Resistance*, Maccoby a few years ago aired some dirty biblical linen in public in a long article in the British monthly, *Encounter*.[11] A critical rejoinder to his article by the late Samuel Sandmel, a distinguished Jewish biblical scholar, particularly infuriated Maccoby, for Sandmel chastised him for bringing the issue of the historical Jesus out into the open before a general audience which does not read professional biblical scholarship. And Maccoby was quite right in objecting to the type of self-censorship Sandmel was apparently recommending to his fellow Jews.

Maccoby's book on the political Jesus has not found much support among scholars. Still, he has some cogent things to say about Christian and ex-Christian biblical scholars. In surveying the recent scholarship on the problem of the historical Jesus, Maccoby shows that "Christian theology always appears to be swinging between two poles: the affirmation of Christianity and its superiority to Judaism, and, on the other hand, the affirmation of the oneness of Judaism and Christianity."

Furthermore, he finds that the various interpretations of biblical scholars demonstrate less scholarly discovery and reflection than very tendentious theological or other ideological positions. He charges biblical scholars with the sin of which he himself has been charged: the attempt to validate or defend theological positions rather than the impartial dissemination of scholarly research. Albert Schweitzer said the same thing almost a century ago. Biblical scholarship is itself totally enmeshed in the same Christian-Jewish nexus it seeks to unravel.

Immediately relevant here is an ongoing debate on the shortcomings of German Protestant biblical scholarship. No nation has contributed more to biblical scholarship and theology than Germany; since no nation in the modern world has practiced anti-Semitism with such success as Germany, the entire question becomes one of burning concern. It is becoming clear that German theology and scholarship have played a central role in the modern dilemma of Christians and Jews.

A leading figure of Conservative Judaism in the early 20th century, Solomon Schechter, made the telling remark that German Higher Criticism of the Bible was "the higher anti-Semitism." One may discount Schechter's perhaps overly traditional defense of Jewish non-participation in modern biblical scholarship; his remark was nevertheless exceedingly insightful and right on target. It comes as no surprise that traditionalist or conservative Christian teaching should continue the normative tradition of denigrating the Jewish people. What is surprising is the role of liberal Protestant scholarship, particularly German scholarship, in reinforcing, indeed in intensifying, the negative image of the Jews among Christian believers.

SCHOLARS have of late been focusing with increasing sharpness on the defects of biblical criticism characteristic of the German academic establishment in the last century. The German liberal Protestant scholars projected onto Judaism what their tradition had found most objectionable in Catholicism: a religion characterized by legalism, casuistry, and the neglect of the spirit. So pervasive did this distortion of Judaism become among German Protestant scholars that persuasive modern scholarship with a more positive appraisal of Judaism never found much acceptance in Germany. In the hands of the German critics,

> the frequent Christian charge against Judaism . . . is not that some individual Jews misunderstood, misapplied, and abused their religion, but that *Judaism necessarily tends* toward petty legalism, self-serving and self-deceiving casuistry, and a mixture of arrogance and lack of confidence in God.[12]

Rudolf Bultmann, who more than any other scholar has defined the parameters of biblical scholarship for much of the Christian world, may be credited with implanting into New Testament scholarship a serious, pervasive distortion of Judaism. While Jewish scholars may be somewhat perplexed about Bultmann's contribution to the question of Jesus' relationship to the Judaism of his day, it seems at least clear that for him and his numerous followers in scholarship, Judaism is of little interest or relevance.

The German Protestant distortion of Judaism, however, goes back considerably earlier than the work of Bultmann. The seminal work of Julius Wellhausen in the last third of the 19th century involved the critical reconstruction of the sources and redaction of the Old Testament. Wellhausen exalted the Israelite prophets of early Hebrew history; he saw in the establishment of the priesthood the antithesis of the true religious spirit. His work separated Judaism from authentic Israelite religion. Judaism became a dry legalism from which Jesus sought to rescue it. In Wellhausen's view the Catholic Church in fact did the same thing to Jesus' teaching that the priesthood had done to the prophets: it effected the substitution

[11] "Is the Political Jesus Dead?," February 1976. See also the discussion of Maccoby's article by Samuel Sandmel, Trude Weiss-Rosmarin, Joel Carmichael, Rosemary Ruether, and a reply by Maccoby, in *Encounter*, April 1977.

[12] E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (1977).

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of organizational rigidity for authentic religion.

Wellhausen published his work in the 1870's and 1880's, when anti-Semitism was becoming particularly virulent in imperial Germany. Derived from both Romanticism and Hegelianism, Wellhausen's denigration of organized religion bore particularly severely on the validity of the Jewish people and its historical self-understanding. According to one authority:

> While there were perhaps few major Old Testament scholars of the 19th century who were explicitly and openly anti-Jewish . . . , it is sadly necessary to acknowledge that the discipline was carried on to a considerable extent under presuppositions decidedly unfavorable to a positive theological evaluation of Judaism. This was true whether the dominant influence was the rationalism of the Enlightenment, which dictated a cultured despisal of the miracles and miscellaneous crudities of the Hebrew Scriptures, or a humanism which devalued the Semitic Old Testament in favor of the Greek New Testament, . . . or a Hegelianism which at the very best relegated Judaism to a superseded stage of evolution.[13]

This scholar goes on to make a partial exception of Adolf von Harnack, the greatest liberal Protestant scholar of imperial Germany, whom he calls a "Marcionite" for believing that the Old Testament was an "unnecessary and expendable burden for the Christian." This returns us to a second look at Marcionism. In his classic work on Marcion, *Das Evangelium vom fremden Gott* (1921), Harnack expressed the view that Marcion had not been a heretic but an intellectual wanting to adapt Christianity to contemporary realities. In his own day Harnack wanted to perform the same necessary service. He believed that the struggle against Protestant fundamentalism required the elimination of the Old Testament from the Church's canon.

Yet while Harnack opposed the political expression of anti-Semitism in imperial Germany, his influence contributed to the low esteem in which the Old Testament and its people were held. At the same time that Harnack saw the Old Testament as an unnecessary burden on meaningful religion, "*völkisch*" theologians in Germany were already placing the Hebrew Scripture on a par with the ancient writings of other alien peoples whose conceptions had no direct relevance for positive, German Christianity. The possibility raised earlier that a Marcionite Christianity might have been more neutral toward the Jewish people than the Christian orthodox tradition therefore needs to be reevaluated in terms of the work of Harnack and his neo-Marcionite disciples.

THE recent work of the historian Uriel Tal helps to unravel the threads of liberal Protestantism in Germany in the Christian-Jewish nexus. Tal demonstrates that German historical and biblical criticism had undermined much of the ground of traditional Christianity and required a new attitude between liberal Protestantism and liberal Judaism. The Protestant liberals identified the Jewish sources of Christianity as the most valuable, and the later "accretions" of the Christian tradition as unintelligible to modern man. Oddly, however, as liberal Protestants looked at the Jewish roots of Christianity, they became frustrated that liberal Jews, who were as ready as they to cast off medieval tradition, did not come to the same conclusions: that the proper modern religion was a Christianity true to its Jewish roots and purged of medievalism. Why, in short, did liberal German Jews not become liberal Protestants? Thus, where scholarship might have contributed to a friendlier attitude on the part of liberal Protestants toward Jews, the Jews' insistence on their own religious integrity aroused suspicion and hostility.

The results of critical scholarship, then, were ambiguous indeed. The latest assessment of the Jews was finally as negative as ever. The German Jews evidently disappointed the Protestant liberals' hopes, as they had disappointed Martin Luther and later the liberals of the European Enlightenment. The more Protestant scholarship uncovered the "relevant" understanding of biblical religion, the more impatient it became with the Jews in its midst. As Tal writes:

> The liberal Protestants argued that modern liberal Judaism was not justified in preserving its separate existence, for by its rejection of the Halakhah it acknowledged the basic doctrine of Christianity and by making ethics the central concern of religion it accepted the basic principle of Western humanistic culture. The liberal Jews, on the other hand, contended that liberal Protestantism was not justified in asserting the superiority of Christianity over Judaism, for with the rejection of the relatively late traditions whose sources were in pagan Christianity it virtually accepted Judaism's basic opposition to Christianity, and by reducing religion to ethics and its theological mysteries to anthropology it denied the dogmatic traditions of the Church and acknowledged the prophetic teachings of Jewish ethics. As the two liberal camps became entrenched in their respective theological positions, they began to attach great importance to the merits of their cause—which only served to inflame the growing spirit of dissension.[14]

Evidently, the umbilical union of Christianity to Judaism, whether interpreted by liberals or traditionalists, whether maintained or severed, guar-

[13] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Prophecy and Canon: A Contribution to the Study of Jewish Origins* (1977).

[14] *Christians and Jews in Germany: Religion, Politics, and Ideology in the Second Reich 1870-1914* (1975).

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anteed that neither Christianity nor Judaism could create a valid theological place for its wayward relation. What could more graphically illuminate the complications of the entire Christian-Jewish nexus than the experience of Christians and Jews in the midst of the academic achievements of German scholarship? Even in this endeavor Germany was the heartland of the "Jewish Question."

THE unsympathetic assessment of Judaism and the Jewish people emerging from Protestant biblical scholarship may seem light-years away from the racist anti-Semitic movement which grew in imperial Germany. After all, to want to convert the Jews to Christianity was quite different from desiring their physical elimination from German life. Yet the scholarly criticism of the biblical tradition played its part even here in the growth of an uncompromising racist position. The racist movement, finding its greatest audience after World War I, depended on the process of the secularization of German society—the growth of materialism, the devaluation of revealed religion, the substitution of anthropology and biology for theology. The achievements of German biblical scholarship, Tal observes, were part of intellectual and social movements which "struck a responsive chord in a rebellious generation, altered the traditional views of God, man, and society, and ultimately led to the pseudo-religion, pseudo-messianic movement of Nazism." According to the harsh judgment of Karl Barth, the logical result of secularized, German Protestantism was membership in the Nazi movement.

Tal writes that despite the differences and antagonisms between Christian anti-Semites and anti-Christian, racist anti-Semites in imperial and Weimar Germany,

> Christianity created the patterns of prejudice, hatred, and calumny that could readily provide a rationale to justify organized violence. The anti-Christian elements of racial anti-Semitism were interpreted in such a way that the traditional theological concepts of Christianity were not completely rejected; only their meanings were changed by using a pseudo-scientific jargon and applied to the historical realities of that day, without the salutary correction of Christian discipline and belief.

The theoretical differences between religious and racist anti-Semitism were, in practice, less important than one might think. The symbiosis between the two varieties of anti-Semitism seems to have obtained also among Catholics in Germany and Austria. The widely accepted view that the Jews were a flawed and guilty people emasculated any possible opposition to racist policy by a determined government. The woes inflicted on the Jewish people consequently could be seen less as the result of their political and social weakness than as the punishment of divine Providence.

The desire of biblical scholars to make Christianity "relevant" can be seen fulfilled, albeit in a perverse way, in the racist acceptance of Christian stereotypes of the Jews and in the attempt to de-Judaize Christianity itself. There is surely a lesson here for those who seek to bring religion "up to date." It is hard to assess with certainty the contribution to and cooperation with racist anti-Semitism on the part of traditional Christian teaching, and scholars possessed of generosity and a desire to make historical amends have sometimes gone too far in indiscriminately making no distinction between the two varieties of anti-Semitism—the Austrian historian Friedrich Heer is an example, in two books which lack balance and judgment[15]—yet it seems inescapable that the Christian tradition *at least* did undermine among the weak and the confused any resolution to oppose the extermination of the Jews in their midst.

THE theological revolution represented so well by the work of Rosemary Ruether has elicited a number of interesting reactions. Those who have responded without rancor or fear—rancor at her lack of orthodoxy and fear for the very survival of Christianity—have at the same time welcomed her initiatives and expressed doubt about the practical results of a theological revision of the Christian-Jewish nexus. Jewish scholars and observers have applauded the good will of the theological radicals but have expressed pessimism that their work will be anything more than "an esoteric exercise restricted in its impact to an intellectual elite."[16] They also fear that any attempt to minimize the fundamental differences and antagonisms between Judaism and Christianity is unhistorical and even potentially dangerous.

Many Christian authors likewise warn that the real differences between the two biblical faiths cannot easily be reconciled, that there are certain non-negotiable central claims which must remain to some degree a source of conflict. One authority, Douglas R.A. Hare, is honest enough to say that there will always be some anti-Judaism in Christianity and some anti-Christianity in Judaism. The gains from an ecumenism which seeks to minimize real differences between beliefs and tra-

[15] *God's First Love: Christians and Jews over Two Thousand Years* (1970), and *Der Glaube des Adolf Hitlers* (Munich, 1968). Heer, no doubt out of compassion, charity, and sorrow, delivers an intemperate attack on all the principal dogmas of Christianity and pretends to find that Hitler, in his anti-Semitism, was a consistently Austrian Catholic.

[16] Jacob Katz, *From Prejudice to Destruction* (1980); see also Frank Talmage, "Christian Theology and the Holocaust," COMMENTARY, October 1975, and Arthur A. Cohen, *The Myth of the Judeo-Christian Tradition* (1971).

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ditions are perhaps offset by the consequences of a cultural relativism which destroys all historic traditions in favor of bland mediocrity. There are thus limits to the revolution in theology.

Nevertheless, all the caveats and timidities, whether from Jewish or Christian circles, betray a certain unconscious fundamentalism about the biblical tradition. Radical theologians and historians plunge ahead toward new interpretations of the tradition in the belief that God, the Lord of history, is still speaking today as He once did in the world of ancient Israel. Edward Schillebeeckx is already in deep trouble with whatever Roman bureaucracy has replaced the Holy Office, and he sees no reason for hesitation in renewing the Church's teaching:

> . . . I do not begrudge any believer the right to describe and live out his belief in accordance with old models of experience, culture, and ideas. But this attitude isolates the Church's faith from any future and divests it of any real missionary power to carry conviction with contemporaries for whom the gospel is—here and now—intended. Obviously, the new models will in turn be replaced by others (just as the Copernican model has already for the most part been superseded). The question is not whether we know better than the faithful of earlier times. The question is what, in view of the new models of thought and experience, we must do, here and now, to preserve a living faith which in this age and because of its truths has relevance for man, his community and society.[17]

From the Jewish side, the distinguished Israeli historian David Flusser is willing to lay aside traditional Jewish objections to Christian messianism and Christology; he finds that an honest investigation of Jewish speculation about the Godhead and the messiah reveals traditions which are close to those developed in Christianity.[18]

Along with Rosemary Ruether, perhaps the most venturesome Christian thinker is Paul Van Buren, who rejects all biblical fundamentalism to call for the continuation of the biblical process of open-ended reevaluation of recent history: just as the traditional Christian attitudes toward the Jews were based on a creative confrontation with early Christian history, modern attitudes must be developed in the full light of contemporary history. A 20th-century "midrash" or imaginative interpretation of the Jewish Question would be fully consistent with the biblical tradition:

> Redaction and canon criticism . . . have helped us to see the Bible as consisting of layered reinterpretations of a sacred tradition occasioned by successive events in Israel's history. That structure is evidently open-ended: it invites further reinterpretation in response to further events, even up to our own times, as it continually challenges our self-understanding and our reading of our own history. . . .

To view the Bible as not a fixed set of facts and beliefs but rather as a method of subjecting human life and history to God's viewpoint and judgment may indeed seem difficult and hazardous. It has been attempted, with some success, in Krister Stendahl's reinterpretation of St. Paul.[19] Stendahl has attempted a reinterpretation of Paul's mission to the Gentiles and his attitude toward the Jews in the light of the disastrous Christian-Jewish nexus; he abandons the interpretation of Paul developed by St. Augustine and Martin Luther in favor of seeing him primarily as concerned with how to bring the Gentiles to God. In this context, the non-belief of Israel leaves center stage for the periphery.

One may find Stendahl's view of Paul somewhat one-sided and somewhat in contradiction to some of his Epistles, but he is taking seriously the murderous consequences of a fundamentalist interpretation of the Apostle to the Gentiles. The positive assessment of the Jewish people possible with such methods is both exciting and instructive: the overcoming of orthodox fundamentalism can indeed liberate Christians and Jews from their confrontational faiths.

THE role of orthodox Christianity in the teaching and dissemination of anti-Semitism stands indicted and only convoluted special pleading can even attempt to quash the heinous charge. In a careful study of the link between Christian belief and anti-Semitism fifteen years ago, Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark clearly demonstrated the relationship of orthodox belief and anti-Semitic prejudice:

> The causal chain that links the Christian belief and faith to secular anti-Semitism begins with orthodoxy. . . . Orthodoxy, in turn, leads to particularism—a disposition to see Christian truth as the *only* religious truth. Particularism produces a twofold response toward religious outsiders. On the one hand Christian particularism prompts missionary zeal: the faith is open to all mankind if only they will accept it. But when others reject the call to conversion the hostility latent in particularism is activated.
>
> This hostility is directed against all religious outsiders whether they are of another faith or of none. Because of their historic link with Christianity, the Jews are singled out for special attention. . . .
>
> This process—orthodoxy to particularism to religious hostility—culminates in secular anti-Semitism. Almost inexorably, those caught up in this syndrome of religious ideology are led to a general hostility toward the Jews.[20]

[17] *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology* (1979).
[18] Foreword to Clemens Thoma, *A Christian Theology of Judaism* (1980).
[19] *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* (1976).
[20] *Christian Beliefs and Anti-Semitism* (1966).

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Still, to avoid complacency this judgment must be balanced by recognition of the actual and potential anti-Semitism encouraged by liberalized and secularized versions of Christian faith. It was among the 17th- and 18th-century deists that modern hostility toward the Jews probably began. The deists struggled against orthodox and obscurantist Church authorities by seeking to undermine the biblical tradition and the central role of the Jewish people. The anti-Semitic themes in the writings of Voltaire survived in the arsenal of populistic freethinkers. One can read in Hitler's *Tabletalk* during World War II numerous indications of his having digested a Voltairean anticlericalism, anti-Christianity, and anti-Semitism. Modern anti-Semitism owes at least as much to secularism and the destruction of reverence for the biblical tradition as it does to orthodox belief. And religious liberals may come to view the Jews as just as stiff-necked and just as incorrigible as did orthodox Christians. Certainly the Jewish attachment to the land of Israel is difficult for many religious liberals to accept.

TRADITIONAL Christianity places the Jews at the "secret center" of history. It gives them a place of honor in the story of human destiny, a place of honor whose obverse as a place of shame and malediction is always available. The Jews remain a "mystery" more than they remain human beings. The liberal Christian abandons the central role of election and malediction assigned to the Jews and views them as members of another religious or ethnic group. But the claims of the Jews —their traditions and their hopes—strike the liberal as absurd and misanthropic. When the liberal denies the special reprobation of the Jews and their central role in history, he also denies their special relationship to the Lord of history and makes them even more vulnerable to hostility and lack of understanding and tolerance.

There is really nothing "modern" about this Jewish plight. Already in the Greco-Roman world enlightened philosophers and writers accused the Jews—out of liberal principles, not religious prejudice—of *odium humani generis* (hatred of humankind). The decline of Christian orthodoxy has made the modern Jew vulnerable to a hatred that knows neither religious fanaticism nor theological denigration. But he is still hated—and more murderously so.

The current theological revolution in the Christian interpretation of the Jewish people is a work of charity and atonement. One can only wish it well. One must, however, hope that it will continue to seek to tie Christians and Jews, Christianity and Judaism, ever more closely together—that it will enmesh them together more umbilically into the Christian-Jewish nexus. Despite its tragic consequences and historical ambiguities, the Christian-Jewish nexus probably protects Christians and Jews from mutual hatred and self-hatred better than any secular ideology currently available.

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Matthew Arnold and the Resistance

Joseph Epstein

In November 1883, when Matthew Arnold was lecturing in America, Henry James wrote from England to his boyhood friend Thomas Sergeant Perry: "I am very sorry you didn't like poor old Mat. I like him—I love him rather—as I do my old portfolio, my old shoe horn: with an affection that is proof against anything he may say or do today, and proof against taking him too seriously." Not take Matthew Arnold seriously. Now there is a very strange notion indeed—so strange that Max Beerbohm once drew a caricature of Matthew Arnold being addressed by his niece in a caption that read: "Why, Uncle Matthew, oh why, will you not be always wholly serious?" The joke here is that Matthew Arnold, the great high priest of culture in Victorian England, seems hardly ever to have been anything else.

In his letter to Perry, James noted that he had only recently completed an article on Matthew Arnold for the *English Illustrated Magazine* "in which I have expressed nothing but tenderness and in a manner absolutely fulsome." The article appeared in the issue of January 1884, and is worth consulting for the light it casts upon James's odd verdict in his letter to Perry. Henry James was of course a literary critic of great subtlety and penetration, but what is perhaps less commonly known about him is what his dear friend Edith Wharton called his "merry malice." One had to attend most diligently to catch the note of merry malice in James, for he could toss about what he himself called "gracious twaddle" with the best of them. But the one subject on which James allowed no twaddle was art. About it he was always in earnest—about it he could not lie.

James begins his article by listing Matthew Arnold's special qualities. He is the most English of Englishmen and yet, despite this, the most conscious of national idiosyncrasy, for he has developed a style with "a kind of European accent" and "certain ways of looking at things." Arnold is "representative of the critical spirit." He resembles Sainte-Beuve—a high compliment, this, for James—and has an even more ample horizon than the Frenchman, though James wishes Arnold had more closely emulated Sainte-Beuve in writing more on contemporaries and on more strictly literary subjects. Although he recognizes that religion has a reality for Arnold, and has even given his writing a certain power, he regrets that he spends so much time writing about religion, writing which James scores as "a certain amount of misdirected effort." Arnold is for James in some ways a cross between Sainte-Beuve and Renan: "And if he has gone less into the details of literature than the one, he has gone more than the other into the application of religion to questions of life."

Now for a touch or two of Jamesian merry malice. "The felicity of his illustrations is extreme," writes James, meaning that he wished Arnold did not quote so much, or seem to find in his quotations "a little more than is visible to the average reader." As for Matthew Arnold the poet, James writes: "But this limited, just a little precarious, character of his inspiration adds to his value for people who like the quality of rareness in their pleasures, like sometimes to perceive just a little the effort of the poet, like to hear him take breath." I take that last phrase—"to hear him take breath"—to mean that Arnold's poetry rather creaks. James concludes by saying that Arnold is the poet "for the man of culture," that his verse "has a kind of minor magic," and "that it rests the mind, and I think I may add nourishes it." Has a body of poetry ever been buried under higher drifts of faint praise? It would be cruel, if it were not, in Arnold's case, also accurate.

Rolling up his sleeves without quite taking off his jacket, James next sets out to place Matthew Arnold. He calls him a "general critic," a job that Arnold "may really be said to have invented." He did not quite invent culture, James says, with the lightest touch of merry malice, but "he made it more definite than it had been before—he vivified and lighted it up." He spoke, moreover, with the impartiality of culture, said things that immensely needed saying and that no one had said before him, in consequence of which "all criticism is better, lighter, more sympathetic and informed."

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He was also, no small thing, "one of the two or three best English prose-writers of one's day." After a bit more in the way of cavil—perhaps Arnold's tact has sometimes been found wanting, the idiosyncrasies of his prose pushed too far—James concludes that Matthew Arnold was, "more than any one else, the happily proportioned, the truly distinguished man of letters."

Although James insists, in his article, on Matthew Arnold's seriousness, as one follows James through his totting up of Arnold's weaknesses and strengths, it becomes clear that he, James, does not take Arnold altogether seriously. He has placed Arnold, taken his measure—and yet somehow, even though everything he writes about Arnold is true, it does not seem to be the *whole* truth. But then critical justice for Matthew Arnold, as F. R. Leavis noted in a *Scrutiny* essay of 1939, is not easily achieved. "He seems at present to the appraising reader," Leavis wrote, "a peculiarly elusive quantity." At present and, one needs to add, in the past.

Leslie Stephen, the Victorian man of letters, presents a balance sheet on Matthew Arnold that tilts much more on the debit side than Henry James's. Stephen begins his essay by saying that he does not like the notion of ranking poets, but, so saying, he goes on to say that Arnold is not of the same stature as the two major poets of the high Victorian era, Browning and Tennyson. As a critic, though, Arnold is viewed by Stephen as "primarily a poet," which is to say that he, Arnold, was notable neither for "logical analysis" nor for "convincing proof." Arnold perhaps delighted too much "in discovering catchwords, and repeating them sometimes to weariness." This applies to such phrases as "sweetness and light"—a phrase that originated with Swift and supplies the heavy motif in Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*. As for Arnold's definition of poetry as "criticism of life," Stephen owns to confusion about what Arnold could possibly have meant. Arnold's belief in culture, true enough, was part of his heritage and thus of his nature; the effect of his work, granted, was civilizing; reading him, Stephen allows, is always useful as "a shock, unpleasant at times, but excellent in its effects as an intellectual tonic." As in Henry James's essay, so in Leslie Stephen's, there is much back and forth, weak and strong, good and bad. One comes away from Stephen thinking that it is better that Matthew Arnold wrote than not—but not very much better.

Reading T. S. Eliot's essay "Arnold and Pater," one is likely to think perhaps it would have been better had Matthew Arnold never written at all. Eliot harbors for Arnold a respectful distaste. He calls him "rather a propagandist for criticism than a critic," and he has a lower view of Arnold's intellectual gifts than do either James or Stephen:

> Arnold had little gift for consistency or for definition. Nor had he the power of connected reasoning at any length: his flights are either short flights or circular flights. Nothing in his prose works, therefore, will stand very close analysis, and we may very well feel that the positive content of many words is very small.

Worse: "He was a champion of 'ideas' most of whose ideas we no longer take seriously." (There is that word "seriously" again.) But Eliot's real complaint against Arnold is that he "set up Culture to take the place of Religion," without giving a very clear notion of what exactly culture is. "And Culture is a term," Eliot writes, "which each man not only may interpret as he pleases, but must indeed interpret as he can." The best that Eliot can seem to say for Arnold is that, coming alongside Carlyle and Ruskin, he "taught English expository and critical prose a restraint and urbanity it needed." On the other hand, "he produced a kind of illusion of precision and clarity; that is, he maintained these qualities as ideals of style." Thus the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

Jerked free of their contexts the phrases for which Matthew Arnold is best known do not today seem much above the level of slogans. Poetry is "criticism of life"; culture is "the study of perfection"; criticism is "a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world." And let us not forget—as Arnold, in *Culture and Anarchy*, scarcely for a moment allows us to forget—sweetness and light. But Henry James was right to remind his readers that even though the freshness of these Arnoldian formulations was beginning to fade—and James wrote this, recall, nearly a century ago—it was through Arnold, as James noted, "and through him only that we have grown familiar with certain ideas and terms which now form part of the common stock of allusion." Still, they seem little more than clichés now, roughly at the same level of sophistication and usefulness as "knowledge is power" or "time is money"; they seem, that is to say, yawn-inducing pieties which, though they may be true, are not very interesting.

But when the worst has been said about Matthew Arnold—and I have here tried to say it, and summarized others saying it—the fact stands that Arnold remains in the great tradition of literary criticism; that much of his work is still alive and to the point; and that, because of the peculiar turn that contemporary literary culture has taken, Matthew Arnold has become perhaps more important than ever before. Nor is it correct to leave the impression that Arnold has been without admirers within fairly recent times. Lionel Trilling wrote a book-length study of Arnold (originally his doctoral dissertation, a work more than a decade in the making), and his own, more mature work as a critic every-

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where shows the influence of Arnold. F. R. Leavis, though one tends not to think of so intellectually combative a critic as an Arnoldian, was nevertheless an admirer of Matthew Arnold, and thought him one of only four commanding figures in the history of English literary criticism, the other three being Johnson, Coleridge, and T.S. Eliot.

Yet Trilling is dead, Leavis is dead, and any serious revival of Matthew Arnold's reputation appears highly improbable. Certainly, refreshed interest in Arnold seems unlikely to come by way of biography, even though a new biography, one with pretensions to being definitive, has recently been published.* The not entirely shocking findings of Arnold's biographer support the statement made by the Master of Balliol College, Benjamin Jowett—he whose name was made tidily to rhyme with the line, "There's no knowledge, but I know it"—who of Arnold said: "He was the most sensible man of genius whom I have ever known and the most free from personality." And it is true that of the great Victorian prose writers—Ruskin, Carlyle, J. S. Mill, Dickens—Matthew Arnold was the most sane. Modern taste has been trained to prefer geniuses who appear as wounded personalities, maniacally obsessed, psychologically crippled, and here Arnold disappoints entirely.

Reading Park Honan's *Matthew Arnold* one is if anything impressed by the opportunities that Arnold had to turn neurotic, or even a little mad, and how he failed—that is to say, came through—them all. Matthew Arnold wore iron braces on his legs when a small child to correct a deformity; he grew up in the shadow of a strong father, who of course was Thomas Arnold, the great Victorian controversialist and headmaster of Rugby (later one of Lytton Strachey's four subjects in *Eminent Victorians*); he competed among many children for his parents' affection; he roundly disappointed his family by not getting a first at Oxford, he the son of Thomas Arnold; his poetic inspiration dried up on him in mid-career; he lost three of his own children in the span of a few years. . . . The list of setbacks, natural difficulties, and disasters in Arnold's life could be extended, and Honan extends it whenever he can. He is keen to render a psychological portrait of Matthew Arnold, and lines of the following kind, so à la mode and yet so unpersuasive, pop up wherever possible, as in this exegesis of a poem: "The 'pit of fire' suggests a deep vein of guilt in Arnold's elder-brotherism or his rivalry with siblings, in his tendency to love and hate those who came between himself and his mother."

But that Matthew's heart belonged to Mamma—or, as Honan elsewhere maintains, to one of his sisters—seems quite beside the point. Psychological portraiture, in Arnold's case, renders little of value. Matthew Arnold's personality seems to have been remarkably of a piece, wall-to-wall, and the figure in his carpet, if one must be found, lies in the triumph of character over psychology. Psychology wants to know what a man's problems are; character has to do with how he surmounts them. Matthew Arnold surmounted all the problems life put in his way, he played on through, he made a life that was a work of art, not a case study. "In all his work," Honan writes, "Arnold in effect explained himself to his parents." That may or may not be so—Honan does not convince me that it is—but the chief thing is that others read Arnold, that he, Matthew Arnold, as Honan writes, "is the Victorian who matters most."

When Honan takes down his shingle and returns to the stacks, his accomplishments are rather more impressive. He has discovered, for example, the identity of the woman, hitherto unknown, who is the "Marguerite" in some of Arnold's lyric poems: a young German-born woman named Mary Claude whom he had met while on holiday in the Swiss Alps. (Such a discovery, in scholarly circles, ought to be good for tenure at, say, Rutgers or below.) Of more interest to the non-academic reader is the account that runs through the pages of Honan's biography of Matthew Arnold's work-aday life as a traveling school inspector. Arnold worked thirty-five years as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools. The job was no sinecure; it was closer to the reverse: a job offering a very great deal of work for very little pay. Arnold was of that generation of English men of letters who had to earn their living by work other than letters. Work Arnold did, without stint or complaint, for the better part of his adult life as a school inspector. "The actual achievement in producible criticism," wrote F. R. Leavis of Arnold's body of writing, "may not seem a very impressive one." Yet when one considers that—apart from a term as Professor of Poetry at Oxford—Arnold wrote under the lash of a full-time job, it seems quite impressive.

THE job of school inspector put Matthew Arnold and his family to many hardships, and yet it could be argued that, as a critic, it was the making of him. His work gave him a view across England's classes, for it involved reporting on the sad, often squalid schooling arrangements then set up for the children of the working class and paupers in such cities as Liverpool and Birmingham. He witnessed the misery visited upon the underclasses at first hand, and it increased his sympathy while fortifying his belief in the necessity of raising up the beaten down. Yet Arnold never idealized the poor; seeing them, working with them, he knew how far they had to go to reach the purlieus of decent living, let alone culture as he understood it. He knew that more was involved in raising them up than certain obvious

* *Matthew Arnold: A Life*, by Park Honan, McGraw-Hill, 496 pp., $19.95.

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welfare measures that were likely to create, as he once put it, "not only more poor men's bread but more poor men."

Arnold also reported on the schools and universities of France, Germany, Italy, and, later, Switzerland. His reports gave him a certain national celebrity, for the schools of these other countries compared, in Arnold's view, far too favorably with England's, and the comparison caused, predictably, a stir. But the travel that was required to write these reports also widened Arnold's perspective as a writer. Of English critics, he has always seemed the least parochial, and this, too, is owing in part to his work as a school inspector. Continental and classical influences had earlier been a part of Arnold's reading: Herder, Goethe, Spinoza, Epictetus above all. But Arnold's travels as a school inspector put him in close touch with French and German culture, and he wrote a good deal about the writers of both countries, thus contributing to the critic's job, as Edmund Wilson once put it, of cross-fertilization of culture.

In his book Honan takes a swipe at Lionel Trilling's biography, *Matthew Arnold* (1939), for its "remorseless politicizing of Arnold's thought." So it seems to go with biography, figures of the past get Marxed in one generation, Freuded the next. Not that Lionel Trilling's biography of Arnold is Marxist, but Trilling, for all that his book is filled with learning and intelligence, would like Matthew Arnold to be a figure more congenial to the 1930's, the years during which the book was composed. Yet it must be said that, inconveniently enough, Matthew Arnold does not make for a biographical subject of overpowering interest. His was a life, like most lives, without a ripping, a rivening crisis. Even his literary life knew no sharp divisions. "Without consciously renouncing poetry," Honan writes, "Arnold wrote less and less verse after 1853." Later Honan notes: "With 'My Countrymen' in 1856 he dropped literary criticism for ten years, and with the new and at times desperate worry over the violence in the United Kingdom, he turned to social comment." This is a little too calm, too commonplace for modern taste in biography, which tends to prefer subjects who provide sexual extravaganzas, dangerous addictions, abrupt political shifts. Arnold's life provides nothing of the sort.

Quite the reverse. The very shape of Arnold's career seems to resist the biographer's art. As a young man, Arnold's chief mental effort was given over to poetry, work that is now, apart from "Dover Beach" and a few other anthology pieces, largely of academic interest. (In both Trilling's and Honan's books, the lengthy explanations of Arnold's poems make for rather dreary longueurs.) The preponderance of Arnold's later work is given over to writing on religious subjects, about which Henry James, accurately, observed: "There is something dry and dusty in the atmosphere of such discussions, which accords ill with the fresh tone of the man of letters, the artist." All of which is a roundabout way of saying that Arnold's life has for us a vastly more interesting middle than either its beginning or its end. It is, almost exclusively, Matthew Arnold the critic who is of interest today.

What the biographical view does display, though, is that Matthew Arnold was a good man, and a good man, in literature as in the old popular song, is hard to find. He was, as John Morley put it, "incapable of sacrificing the smallest interest of anybody else to his own; he had not a spark of envy or jealousy; he stood well aloof from all the hustlings and jostlings by which selfish men push on; he bore life's disappointments, and he was disappointed in some reasonable hopes and anticipations, with good nature and fortitude; he cast no burden upon others, and never shrank from bearing his own share of the daily load to the last ounce of it; he took the deepest, sincerest, and most active interest in the well-being of his country and countrymen." Whenever it was appropriate to do so, Arnold, in his own criticism, attempted to discover the quality of a man or woman through his or her writing. "The personality of an author had a peculiar importance for him," Arnold wrote of Sainte-Beuve, and the remark applies nicely to himself. "Whatever else we have or have not in Count Tolstoy," Arnold wrote, "we have at least a great soul and a great writer."

Van Wyck Brooks was the last critic to define literature as great men writing. It is not a silly definition, even if less than comprehensive. In nearly all of Matthew Arnold's literary criticism the point of reading is in large part to be in the company of great souls. (Would any critic today think to call a writer a great soul? Are there any great souls among our writers?) Modern criticism, of course, has long taught that one does not inquire too deeply into the life of the writer, for it is his writing, the work itself, that is the main, the great, the supreme thing (except of course for the heavily psychologizing critics for whom the state of the writer's psyche is the only thing). In so teaching, modern criticism forced the first of the fissures between the writer and the work, which would in time be followed by fissures between the work and reality, until we come to the situation of the present day and the opaque lucubrations of structuralists, semioticists, and deconstructionists, in which the work itself is denied any fixed reality.

Not only did Matthew Arnold wish to understand the man behind the writing, he wished to change the souls of men through his own writing. He was clear enough about his intentions. As he himself put it, without becoming directly political he nonetheless wished "to work inwardly upon

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the predominant force in our politics—the great middle class—and cure its spirit." How Arnold went about this is nicely formulated by Lionel Trilling: "To discover and define, then, the dominant tendency of his age, to analyze the good from the bad, foster the good, diminish the bad—this will be Arnold's program of criticism."

As Matthew Arnold entered on this critical program, doubtless somewhere in his mind he must have known that what he wrote in another of his essays on Sainte-Beuve also had application to himself: namely, that "excellent work in a lower kind counts in the long run above work that is short of excellence in a higher; first-rate criticism has a permanent value greater than that of any but first-rate works of poetry and art." After all the disclaimers about Arnold are lodged, the qualifications inserted, that he was a first-rate critic is incontestable. T.S. Eliot once famously remarked that the only way to be a good critic was to be very intelligent—a statement as true as it is unhelpful. Reading Matthew Arnold's criticism, though, one gets a clearer idea of what constitutes intelligence in literary criticism and why certain literary criticism is "compellingly alive," as Leavis once called Arnold's, and most is at birth still-born.

Some critics can turn criticism into a work of art, others into a work of philosophy, but both kinds are extremely rare. Most academic critics—and almost all critics today are academics—write term papers into old age: "The Problem of Identity in D.H. Lawrence," "Pater as Poltergeist," and so forth. No great literary critic has ever had, in the strict sense of the word, a method; no great critic ever formed or was part of a school. Certain critics through their writing have played a decisive role in their time—Vissarion Belinsky, the 19th-century Russian, was such a critic—though their criticism can, after its time, seem quite unreadable (as Belinsky's does to me, at least in English). No, great critics are quite as rare, possibly rarer, than great poets, and Randall Jarrell was surely correct when he wrote: "Unless you are one critic in a hundred thousand, the future will quote you only as an example of the normal error of the past, what everyone was foolish enough to believe then. Critics are discarded like calendars. . . ."

Matthew Arnold is the one in a hundred thousand—a critic whom we do not discard, for his work is still alive, still readable, still significant. How does this happen to be so? Prose style is part of the answer. Arnold had the gift of style, and his prose, when it was flowing well, combined winningly the qualities of stateliness and intimacy: he could be witty and ironic and thunderously earnest by turns. But other critics have written well, even beautifully—Van Wyck Brooks comes to mind—who are not so rereadable as Arnold; while still other critics have often written wretchedly—F.R. Leavis—and can still be reread. Prose alone is not the way for a critic to escape oblivion.

Nor is right opinion. To be correct in all one's literary opinions is, similarly, no guarantee of enduring as a critic. Arnold was often wrong in his opinions. There were important opinions he never registered; he never, as Honan points out, wrote about any of the major living English writers of his time: Dickens, George Eliot, Browning, Tennyson, Carlyle, Ruskin. Literary sensibility weighs in more heavily than correct opinion in a critic, and literary sensibility Arnold had *in excelsis*. His pages are filled with glittering observations, examples of seeing both the forest and the trees, such as the following fine distinction between the characters of Anna Karenina and Emma Bovary:

> . . . *Madame Bovary* . . . is a work of *petrified feeling*; over it hangs an atmosphere of bitterness, irony, impotence; not a personage in the book to rejoice or console us; the springs of freshness and feeling are not there to create such personages. Emma Bovary follows a course in some respects like that of Anna, but where, in Emma Bovary, is Anna's charm? The treasures of compassion, tenderness, insight, which alone amid such guilt and misery, can enable charm to subsist and to emerge are wanting to Flaubert. He is cruel, with the cruelty of petrified feeling, to his poor heroine; he pursues her without pity or pause, as with malignity; he is harder upon her himself than any reader ever, I think, will be inclined to be.

What superior perspective and large-mindedness were behind observations of this high caliber!

Still, adding up right and wrong literary opinions is not, finally, very useful, and Arnold himself apparently did not think so. On the subject of literary opinion he quoted, approvingly, Sainte-Beuve: "I hold very little to literary opinions; literary opinions occupy very little place in my life and in my thoughts. What does occupy me seriously is life itself and the object of it."

"LIFE ITSELF" was always at the center of Matthew Arnold's critical writing, and here, combined with his sheerly literary gifts, is to be found the secret of the survival of his criticism unto our day. As a critic, Arnold was able to grasp life in its interrelatedness: literary, moral, and spiritual values were for him twined. As a record of man's yearnings and imaginings, defeats and triumphs, literature was flush with morality, with things of the spirit, and was therefore a human activity of absolute centrality. Trained in reading this record, in understanding it, the literary man took a privileged place, and it was not, in Arnold's view, off on the sidelines. "I have a conviction," Arnold wrote to his sister in 1865, "that there is a real, an almost imminent danger of England losing immeasurably in all ways, declining . . . for want of what I must still

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call ideas, for want of perceiving how the world is going and must go, and preparing herself accordingly. This conviction haunts me, and at times overwhelms me with depression." As this quotation shows, ideas for Arnold were not things to play with, intellectual toys to last a season. They shaped reality, and on how reality was perceived hung the fate of nations. And who is to say that, in this fundamental belief, Arnold was wrong?

Honan writes that, in his lifetime, Arnold "gained fame because he was audacious, challenging, fresh, witty, on the move in his ideas and topics, in the thick of controversy, and undaunted in probing the weakness of an industrial society. He was not ephemeral or superficial . . . but he was unique in his voice and presence, irony, range, urbanity, and sensitivity, as he brought into his essays a sense of the Western literary heritage." And, one is tempted to add, so on and so forth. One has seen all these qualities lined up fore and aft of Arnold's name, and, true enough, legitimate claim to them can be made for him. For all his shortcomings, there can be no doubt that, when Arnold was writing well, we are, as Leavis put it, reading the work of "an extraordinarily distinguished mind in complete possession of its purpose and pursuing it with easy mastery—that, in fact, we are reading a great critic."

But what made Arnold great, along with his distinctive literary skills, was his assumptions. Chief among these were that nothing was quite so important as literature and that literature was never to be treated as an end in itself. Literature's effect on the general culture, though always subtle and never all that easy to make out, was decisive, even crucial. Arnold put the point neatly in his essay, "The Bishop and the Philosopher": "Literary criticism's most important function is to try books as to the influence which they are calculated to have upon the general culture of single nations or of the world at large. Of this culture literary criticism is the appointed guardian, and on this culture all literary work may be conceived as in some way or other operating." Guardians of the culture, literary critics are akin to philosopher-kings, but of the spirit; in the same essay, Arnold notes: "The highly instructed few, and not the scantily instructed many, will ever be the organ to the human race of knowledge and truth." And to whom do these guardians of the culture talk? Arnold answered the question in his essay, "Dr. Stanley's Lectures on the Jewish Church": "The few who live this life stand apart, and have an existence separate from that of the mass of mankind; they address an imaginary audience of their mates; the region which they inhabit is the laboratory wherein are fashioned new intellectual ideas which, from time to time, take their place in the world. Are these few justified, in the sight of God, in so living? That is a question which literary criticism must not attempt to answer."

Such notions are today nicely calculated to bring cries of "Elitist!" Arnold, though, is scarcely likely to have been troubled by them; standards, for him, were essential, and without them all else collapsed. In his essay, "The Literary Influence of Academies," Arnold deplored that there was in England "no body of opinion . . . strong enough to set up a standard." One of his complaints about the United States was that, "The *average man* is too much a religion there; his performance is unduly magnified, his shortcomings are not duly seen and admitted." The problem, as Arnold viewed it in a brief essay on Milton, is that "when the right standard of excellence is lost, it is not likely that much that is excellent will be produced." Arnold would have agreed with Renan, who wrote: "All ages have had their inferior literature; but the great danger of our time is that this inferior literature tends more and more to get the upper place."

It was the job of the literary critic to set the right standard of excellence, and by doing so, as Arnold put it in "The Function of Criticism at the Present Time," "to make an intellectual situation of which the creative power can profitably avail itself." And more: "It [criticism] tends to establish an order of ideas, if not absolutely true, yet true by comparison with that which it displaces; to make the best ideas prevail. Presently these new ideas reach society, the touch of truth is the touch of life, and there is a stir and growth everywhere; out of this stir and growth come the creative epochs of literature." And, though Arnold does not say so, the greater enrichment of all.

Because Matthew Arnold understood the relationship between literature and society, because he knew the significant function of the critic as a broker in that relationship, because he practiced that function consummately, his criticism continues to live. Because Arnold knew that literature is never an end in itself, he is serious in precisely the way that T. S. Eliot—who, as we have seen, did not think much of Arnold—accused Paul Valéry in his criticism of failing to be serious: in showing the relation of literature to experience. And because, finally, all that Matthew Arnold believed important about literature is generally flouted by practitioners of academic literary criticism today, Arnold is, or at any rate ought to be, a figure, the leading one, in what I have come to think of as the Resistance.

What the Resistance is resisting is the major trends in the study of literature in the United States at the present time. A shorthand way of grasping what is going on in literary studies today is to understand that nearly everything in which Matthew Arnold most ardently believed about the importance of literature has been rejected. Culture, Arnold felt, was skeptical of systems and

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system-makers, and of course it is precisely such systems that are on the rise in our day: structuralism, semiology, deconstructionism (even though the last is a kind of anti-system system). Their adherents are critics who treat literature as an end in itself, as Arnold never did, and who manage to make literature seem much more complicated while at the same time a good deal less interesting than one would have thought possible. These critics are of course all academics. Arnold saw the beginnings of the professionalization of literature, but he was perhaps fortunate not to see its nearly complete professorialization, which is what, in criticism, we have today. Arnold had a not very favorable view of teaching, calling it, in his essay on Maurice de Guérin, "that common but most perfidious refuge of men of letters. . . ." That the study—and increasingly the creation—of literature was one day to be almost wholly in the province of universities, as it is now, would have seemed to Arnold depressing in the extreme.

One of the reasons behind the professorialization of literature has been vastly increased university enrollments. Even though Arnold might have thought these increased enrollments represented a victory for culture—conceiving as he did "of no perfection as being real which is not a *general* perfection, embracing all our fellow-men"—it seems greatly unlikely that Arnold would have been other than saddened at the negligible effect of the spread of higher education on standards. Arnold thought to bring the middle and working classes *up* through culture, "by means of reading, observing, thinking." Much depended, it hardly needs saying, upon what one read, observed, thought about. Under the current dispensation of teaching popular culture in universities, the new notion seems to be to bring the children of the middle classes *down* through courses in science fiction, movies, detective stories, and the like.

Considering popular culture, Thomas Edwards, writing in *Raritan*, a new journal of professorial criticism, asks if some of its "advanced" developments may not be "as interesting as many recent developments in high arts," and then proceeds to note that we are living "at a time when high art, and its serious criticism, seem to be moving even farther from the idea of a common high-cultural center." Edwards thinks that the interest in popular culture puts "intellectual seriousness to the kind of test *it* deserves." He may think so but he apparently does not have the heart (or the courage) to say that "the common high-cultural center"—an ideal taken over from Matthew Arnold—is finished. Leslie Fiedler, though, has no difficulty saying it: ". . . the hierarchical view of literature at its heart is a vestige of a defunct, class-structured society, no longer viable in the world of mass communications and advanced technology, whether capitalist or socialist."* Under the banner of such advanced thought, Arnold's old definition of criticism as "a disinterested endeavor to learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world" is out. A semiological study of Woody Woodpecker is the wave of the future.

"When the right standard of excellence is lost," Arnold wrote, "it is not likely that much that is excellent will be produced." Standards in literary matters have been shaky for a long while now. True, there is still, in universities, a consensus that holds Shakespeare to be above Arthur Miller, Pushkin above Pynchon, but there is no similar consensus of what ought and what ought not to be taught. This might seem a healthy thing, if it did not proceed largely from shot confidence, and an absence of the kind of intellectual authority that is prepared to argue that some subjects, books, authors, are more important than others and that, this being so, the former ought to be taught and the latter excluded. As things stand, inclusion is increasingly by professorial whim and convenience. Novelists who write, as it sometimes seems, chiefly for exegesis have made it into the literature curriculum; so have subjects that have only to recommend them a strong student demand.

As in the university, so outside it, standards have not so much slipped as disappeared. Criticism has increasingly become an arm of cultural publicity. The house speciality here seems to be the five-year genius—Woody Allen, John Irving, who will be next?—the cultural figure who holds the publicity foreground for half a decade or so, then is shunted off stage to make way for the next such figure. Criticism could have prevented such febrility, but can anyone name three book reviewers whom, on the most fundamental level, he can trust? By fundamental level, I mean that if these reviewers tell you that a work is serious you can count on its being so; and can count as well that their opinion is not the result of cowardice, vanity, or politics.

Matthew Arnold had his politics, but they were the politics of culture. He thought anarchy "intolerable," but also thought that the 19th-century liberalism ascendant in his day—"the mechanical and material civilization in esteem with us"—was, as he put it, "inadequate." Arnold set culture above politics, writing: "But if despondency and violence are both of them forbidden to the believer in culture, yet neither, on the other hand, is public life and direct political action much permitted to him." Again, Arnold could hardly be other than dismayed at our own contemporary scene, where politics is permitted not only to transcend but to shape culture, so that, to cite only the most obvious example, the idea of a cen-

* *English Literature: Opening Up the Canon*, edited by Leslie A. Fielder and Houston A. Baker, Jr., Johns Hopkins University Press, 161 pp., $8.50.

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tral common culture is chipped away to accommodate the claims of several political groupings —minorities, women, the young—as if culture were spoils to be divided up in a smoke-filled room.

REVULSION does not seem too strong a word to apply to Matthew Arnold's likely reaction to those novelists and poets, philosophers and critics who spend the better part of their time devising techniques that attempt to demonstrate that reality does not exist; or at least not in so substantive a way that a text can have a generally agreed-upon meaning, one idea be more persuasive than another, or that literature can be taken for anything other than a self-referential activity. One can only imagine Arnold rubbing his eyes at the spectacle of bloated self-importance as he reads such sentences from contemporary critics —all writing in the magazine *Raritan*—as this from Leo Bersani: "I would now like to propose a model of fantasmatic sexuality supplemental to, and subversive of, the model just derived from Laplanche's reading of Freud"; or this from Harold Bloom: "The promulgation of the catastrophe is indeed already the condition of language, the condition of the ruins of time, and of the defense against time, the deep lie at every reimagined origin"; or this from Richard Poirier: "Thus it is that Foucault and Nietzsche offer, in my view, an occasion for participating in the only momentarily exhilarating and cleansing imagination of self-eradication." One can as readily imagine Matthew Arnold reeling at an MLA meeting, in his hand a program announcing one goofy paper after another, while in the room the graduate students come and go, talking of Michel Foucault.

If T. S. Eliot disapproved of Matthew Arnold for substituting culture (chiefly literary culture) for religion at a time when religious traditions were wearing thin, today it is the literary tradition that is wearing thin, if not altogether coming apart. F.R. Leavis made essentially this same point, and it is a compelling one. In this situation Arnold remains the man for those who revere the tradition and wish to resist the forces, literary, critical, and political, that have done so much to undermine it. Arnold is the man because, for all that can be said against him, he anticipated the issues of our day, and on every one his own position is admirable—admirable and tenable and usable in our time. Not least, he knew that literature was itself very real, that the perception of literature shapes the way reality itself is perceived, that literature is about life and is part of life. If Matthew Arnold was wrong about any of this, then perhaps it is just as well that the literary tradition die out, while, like astrologers, writers and critics continue to practice an art dead and in disrepute, and the rest of us turn to the crossword puzzle.

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The Curious Career of Costa-Gavras

Richard Grenier

Costa-Gavras is the world's premier agitprop film-maker. He casts well. He has a good sense of drama and timing. He has a decided talent for political melodrama, for the mood, for the visual creation of atmosphere. Like all toilers in the vineyards of political agitation he suffers from a marked decomposition of reality into pure good and pure evil, but he seems to take to this naturally, happily, at no great psychic cost. He is uncomfortable with all those wishy-washy shades of gray as a matter of temperament, and even ordinary, everyday black and white are usually not clear-cut enough for him. Onward he drives, in his quest for an ever more sable night, an ever more luminous day. His is the temperament of the born agitprop man, of course, but those who share his political orientation (radical Left and anti-American) find him humane and compassionate, soothed, perhaps, by such clarity of vision, such certainty, such rectitude.

Born in Greece but removed to France at the age of eighteen in 1952, when Stalin lived and many who were to be his mentors were still unabashed Stalinists, Costa-Gavras became known to the wide world of movies in 1969 with his *Z*, from the Greek *ZEI*, "He lives." The film contains scenes which imply quite plainly that there was CIA complicity in the Greek colonels' coup in 1967, and I remember rather clearly Costa-Gavras's replies at his press conference at the Cannes Film Festival, where *Z* won the Special Jury Prize, since I was pressed into service and sat beside him on the podium as his French-English interpreter. When a question came from a French speaker as to whether his film indicated such CIA complicity, Costa-Gavras answered yes. But when virtually the same question was put to him by an American correspondent (his U.S. distribution deal being yet unsigned), he answered with some dexterous doubletalk, ending with a ringing denial that the film was anti-American. His reply seemed based on the not unreasonable assumption that most Americans would not enjoy hearing their country attacked, and I can only imagine the thrill he must have felt as over the years he discovered vehement anti-Americanism in America itself—even in Hollywood, which he has finally reached after so many years of striving.

His new film, *Missing*, affirms categorically (on the basis of no evidence that has yet come to light) that the U.S. engineered still another coup, in Chile in 1973 this time, and also (on nonexistent evidence) that U.S. officials had ordered, or at least condoned, the execution of an innocent young American in Chile because he "knew too much" about U.S. complicity in the coup.

The Universal Pictures executive who supervised *Missing* has sworn that he believes in it "heart and soul," as, apparently, do many film critics—a group not notorious for its wide political expertise. Costa-Gavras has not given up his "I love America" line, of course. He loves America for the "incredible freedom of expression" that allowed public opinion to be organized against the Vietnam war, for example, which he calls "an extraordinary history lesson." He has been reported as saying he is "convinced" (on the basis of intuition) that "the U.S. government had something to do with the coup in Chile," and that mobilizing the American public is "the only way" to put a stop to the horrors of United States-supported military dictatorship in Latin America. The fact that his film could be made, he says, "is probably one of the biggest proofs of democracy and freedom in this country." Here is a man who clearly loves America.

But let us take Costa-Gavras's career from the top, as they say in Hollywood—where he is the cutest thing in radical politics since Jane Fonda in her glory days. But more prudent. I once heard with my own ears Jane Fonda shout out at a rally, "If you only understood Communism you'd be down on your knees begging for it!" Now Costa-Gavras would never say a thing like that. Not in America.

Costa-Gavras had been knocking about in the French cinema for many years as an assistant director before he got a chance to direct his own movie, *The Sleeping Car Murders*, in 1964, thanks to the sponsorship of Simone Signoret and Yves Montand, both long-time supporters of left-wing causes. Curiously, in the same year, despite their ardent leftism, Montand and Signoret (solicited repeatedly) denied their support to François Mitterrand, who was making his first run as the Socialist party candidate for the French Presidency, against Charles de Gaulle. Aversion to Western social democrats is a pattern we shall observe episodically in the behavior of Costa-Gavras, Simone Signoret, her husband Montand, and others of their friends, and I mention it here because for this circle in the French entertainment world politics has always meant, if not everything, at least a very great deal.

As it happens, *The Sleeping Car Murders*, starring Montand and Miss Signoret, had little to do with politics. There was a bit of sounding off at a police detective (vicarious gratification, just fun), but the film was a crime thriller, and a

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very good one at that. Performances by Montand, Signoret, Michel Piccoli, Charles Denner, and Miss Signoret's daughter, Catherine Allegret (we're making a family film, joked Signoret) were excellent. The film was a critical and commercial success, and Costa-Gavras was on his way.

His next movie, *Shock Troops*, a tale of the French Resistance in World War II, failed both commercially and critically, but was invited to the Moscow Film Festival. At this point, however, an event occurred in Costa-Gavras's native Greece that placed in his lap a story which was to make him one of the world's best-known film directors.

In 1963 a left-wing socialist political leader named Gregorios Lambrakis, a fine orator and shining light of the EDA party, had been run over and killed by a motorcycle after a political rally in Salonika. The initial cover-up statement—that the incident was a "traffic accident"—had been ridiculed, and it was widely believed, no doubt correctly, that Lambrakis had been the victim of a political assassination. During four ensuing years of turmoil (vastly simplified and rearranged in the movie), revelation followed revelation. Governments fell (not always as a result of the Lambrakis case). And finally, in April 1967, came the military coup d'état led by Colonel George Papadopoulos. A Greek author in exile, Vassili Vassilikos, fictionalized the tale in a novel in which he identified the villains only vaguely: the forces of reaction. But Costa-Gavras saw more clearly into the heart of things. He had his colonels, and the world's attention, and *Z* was born.

I must give Costa-Gavras his due. He makes first-rate political thrillers. In *Z* Montand plays Lambrakis; Jean-Louis Trintignant plays the Greek equivalent of the honest and idealistic young district attorney; all the heavies are superbly done, particularly the sadistic homosexual assassin himself, Marcel Bouzzuffi (who was later to play the Corsican arch-thug in *The French Connection*). The story drives on at a terrific rate, murderers and assorted conspirators being caught out in contradictory stories somewhat more neatly than in life, but with high-ranking military plotters implicated again and again. Given the military junta so recently arrived in power in Athens, the story had great surface plausibility for audiences who knew little of Greek politics.

So far my account of the story of *Z* does not differ substantially from that given by most American movie critics, who—in the National Society of Film Critics—voted *Z* the best picture of 1969. But whether because these critics did not have much French (the subtitles being perhaps inadequate), or for some other reason, a sizable number of details seemed to have escaped their attention. Ten minutes into the movie, we have a scene in which Lambrakis's lieutenants are conferring about an anonymous warning they have received of an assassination plot. One of the group has reported the warning to Greece's Attorney General (whose functions would include direction of the equivalent of our FBI), and another of the lieutenants protests vigorously, "The Doctor [Lambrakis was a doctor] is going to be furious when he hears we've asked for protection from those *vendus*." (The word *vendu* is far stronger than its literal meaning, "sold out"; the dictionary definition is "traitor.") "Sold out to whom?" asks another member of the Lambrakis group. "To the Americans," answers the first. "I really wonder what the Americans have to do with this," says his interlocutor, to which he is given the following answer: "You should always blame the Americans, even when you think you're wrong. *They* know you're right."

A few more minutes and we are shown shots of the crowd at the rally, waiting for Lambrakis. Interestingly, it is a "peace" rally. The crowd is shouting, "Disarm! Disarm!" "Weapons to the junk heap!" "No more NATO bases!" "NATO out!" Signs and placards are displayed about the rally calling for (Western) nuclear disarmament. In the midst of all the milling and shouting, a British correspondent, indicating a poster of Lambrakis, asks a local reporter, "Communist?" "Not at all," says the Greek reporter. "He's simply trying to free our country of foreign influences."

As Lambrakis emerges from his hotel he learns that the meeting hall, for which the rally was originally planned, has been closed to him, and that the rally will be held outdoors. "Looks like a set-up to me," says his chief lieutenant. "Set up by whom?" asks Lambrakis. "Well," answers the lieutenant, "we're demanding the closing of foreign bases, aren't we?" Then, answering his own question: "The CIA." Lambrakis smiles. "You don't think you're overstating a bit?" When Lambrakis mounts the podium at the rally, he gives a resounding speech on the theme: "Peace will sound the death knell of the great heavy industries which base their power on the arms race!"

By and large, surprisingly, the picture we get of the movie-Lambrakis (always called, ritually, "the Doctor") corresponds fairly closely to the historical Lambrakis, at least on matters of policy. We must recall the world of 1963, when European neutralism had nothing like the scope it has today. It was still the age of *Ich bin ein Berliner*, when America's nuclear superiority was immense and Kennedy had stared Khrushchev down in the Cuban missile crisis. To be a Western unilateral disarmer in those days had a very specific political meaning. The Communist party was banned in Greece, where a long civil war had been fought against Communist guerrillas, but the EDA party, of which Lambrakis was a leader, had policies in foreign and domestic affairs which would have been hard to distinguish from those of the Communist parties of western Europe. Although Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., in his review of the movie, referred to Lambrakis and his supporters as "decent men in a brutal world," in the most sober history books EDA is called "pro-Communist," "Left-Communist," "fellow-traveling," or, disregarding legalisms, simply "Communist." When Prime Minister Karamanlis once needed EDA's support to maintain himself in power, he resigned, declaring he would not be dependent on "Com-

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munists." Lambrakis himself was vigorously anti-American and anti-NATO, against nuclear weapons, a unilateral disarmer, and an ardent proponent of friendship with the Soviet Union. The night he was assassinated he was the main speaker at a rally of the "Friends of Peace" protesting against the basing of U.S. *Polaris* submarines in Greece. And we should not imagine that all this was going on somewhere in Iceland. Salonika, where the rally was held, is forty miles from the Bulgarian border and the Warsaw Pact.

Insinuations that the United States was behind the assassination of Lambrakis continue throughout the film. After the assassination, Lambrakis's chief lieutenant, Manuel (Charles Denner), insists to the examining magistrate in strident tones that the real guilty parties are "in the administration and higher yet, in the [Royal] Palace where the chief of the state police was on duty. [Close-up of Manuel.] And since the Palace never does anything without its foreign protectors, if you want to find the real guilty parties you should look—" Here the magistrate cuts Manuel off sharply, but it is not hard to see where he was headed. During the film's epilogue, the Greek journalist, among many other wrap-up details, announces: "A Deputy [Member of Parliament] told the court that the prime movers of the affair should be sought in the Palace and in the CIA." He adds (in a remark that got an approving chuckle when I saw the film at the Cannes Festival): "But he was a Deputy of the extreme Left."

The inimitable "Costa-Gavras touch" can be shown in a single detail of the film: not content with showing the fictionalized Lambrakis to be a hero, victim, and even martyr, he must be made a saint as well. Roughed up by some bully boys on his way to a rally to call for rejection of U.S. military support and for disarmament, the movie-Lambrakis, a true man of peace, asks sadly, ruefully, "Why do the ideas we defend provoke *this violence*?" One can be sure that, whatever else he thought, the real Lambrakis knew the answer to this question very well.

SINCE COSTA-GAVRAS is such a polemical film-maker—the movies' equivalent of a pamphleteer—some details of his political background might be appropriate. I make use of no private information but only of material that is a matter of public record.

His father was a Russian, from Odessa. After emigrating to Greece, the elder Costa-Gavras fought against the Germans in World War II in a Resistance group considered Communist and was in and out of Greek jails on suspicion of being a Communist for five years after 1945 (during most of which time, it should be remembered, a furious civil war was being fought against Communist forces in the north). Whether he really was a Communist or not I have no idea.

Costa-Gavras, the son, feeling his future in Greece blighted, applied for an immigration visa to the United States, but it was refused. He arrived in France in 1952, and began a new life, reading Marx and Lenin like "forbidden fruit," he told the New York *Times*. In time he became what he calls a "Sartrean Marxist."

Asked a decade or so ago if he was a Communist, Costa-Gavras answered, "To be a Communist means to follow a party line. This is impossible for Greeks like me, who prefer to be independent." Of course there is an expression for people of Communist sympathies who "prefer to be independent," and that is "fellow-traveler." (Jorge Semprun, the well-known novelist and author of *Z*'s screenplay, was a member of the Spanish Communist party for twenty-five years until he was expelled in 1965, very much against his will.)

Regarding "Sartrean" Marxism, for those who know Jean-Paul Sartre as a vaguely literary celebrity and who are unaware of his virulent hatred of the U.S. and of what a fellow Frenchman once called his "bootlicking" attitude toward the Soviet Union, I shall choose only one of the many lapidary sentiments in which he expressed his overall view of the world: "To keep hope alive one must, in spite of all mistakes, horrors, and crimes, recognize the obvious superiority of the socialist [Soviet] camp." The reader will note that I did not choose the word "Sartrean" to describe Costa-Gavras's Marxism; he picked it out himself.

THIS Sartrean attitude goes some way to explain Costa-Gavras's motivation in deciding in his next film, *The Confession*, to tell the story of the Slansky trial in Czechoslovakia. The trial of Rudolf Slansky and his associates in 1952, following so closely the techniques pioneered in the Moscow trials some fifteen years earlier, was the high-water mark of Czechoslovak Stalinism, and the film—marvelously well-made and acted—was taken by many as a rip-roaring anti-Communist movie. But in the intention of its authors, at least, it was not that at all. It was a rip-roaring anti-*Stalinist* movie. The author of the original nonfiction book, Artur London (played by Yves Montand, with Simone Signoret playing London's wife), was after all a Communist. He had been one and he remained one, considering Stalinism to be—that famous word—an "aberration" which did not discredit the system as such.

Costa-Gavras was in lock-step with Artur London. He vehemently denied that *The Confession* was an anti-Communist movie, maintaining that it condemned the "perversion" of Communism and not Communism itself. He had "repressed" his doubts and criticisms of Stalinism all that time, he said (i.e., for fourteen years longer than the Soviet leadership in Moscow), but "my film has been a catharsis."

Now it is quite possible that in *The Confession* Artur London and Costa-Gavras did not carry their audience with them in their long-term Sartrean view of the superiority of Communism and the Soviet system. I heard one Frenchman, walking out of the movie on the Champs Elysées in Paris, declare, "Well, if Artur London's still a Communist after that, good luck!" But look at the problem from another point of view. Suppose, just hypothetically, that one had a history of being a Soviet apologist. Suppose, further, that one wanted to condemn the United States, let's say, for the ignominies it had committed in Uruguay and Chile. How

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could one do this credibly without having first condemned the great tyranny of the East, Stalinism? In *The Confession*, the deed was done.

Or so it seemed. It was not done so far as Lionel Jospin, the First Secretary of France's governing Socialist party, was concerned. Recently Costa-Gavras, Yves Montand, Simone Signoret, Jorge Semprun, and half a dozen intimates (it is a tight little group) issued a communiqué vehemently condemning France's Socialist government for the alleged softness of its reaction to the Jaruzelski crackdown in Poland. Accustomed as Jospin was to these people's attacking French Socialism from the Left (Montand had once again refused to support Mitterrand during the recent presidential election), he did not take kindly to their suddenly shifting their ground and attacking it from the Right, presenting themselves as principled opponents of Soviet oppression.

After indicating misrepresentations in the communiqué, Jospin pointed out with some acidulousness that the communiqué strangely did not even mention the behavior of the French Communist party—which had not whispered a word of protest against Jaruzelski. This led the Socialist First Secretary to conclude that for many members of the group it was hard to bury their "old loves." In plain language, this meant they had been long-time supporters of Soviet-style Communism. Jospin felt it was ill-advised for Yves Montand in particular to sign a communiqué criticizing French Socialists for their "attitude" at the time of the crushing of the Budapest rising in 1956 (thrown in for good measure along with the Socialist "attitude" at the time Franco launched the Spanish Civil War in 1936) since Montand himself, immediately after Soviet tanks smashed the revolt in Hungary, had gone on a grand professional good-will singing tour of the Soviet Union.

So, if for American film critics Costa-Gavras and his friends have impeccable liberal credentials as lovers of freedom everywhere, for French Socialists—who know them better, one might think—they are people of a certain political coloration. The world was not created yesterday.

After making *The Confession* to "de-Stalinize" himself (as, to repeat, the Soviet Union had done fourteen years before him), Costa-Gavras returned to his more normal political role as a champion of Sartrean Marxism. Even those of his movie projects which never got to the screen were revealing in this respect. At one time in the 70's he planned to make a film about the Paris Commune of 1871, according to the Marxist canon the first occasion in world history when the industrial working class seized power. In the mausoleum on Red Square in Moscow, Lenin's mummy to this day lies wrapped in the red flag of the Paris Commune. Another Costa-Gavras project was a filmed version of André Malraux's *La Condition Humaine* ("Man's Fate"), a tale of Communist revolutionaries and terrorists in Shanghai, written during Malraux's Communist period.

A film Costa-Gavras actually made, in 1974, was *Special Section*, which had only indifferent success—perhaps because it was his only film between *Z* and his departure for Hollywood which did not star Yves Montand. In Vichy France during the Nazi hegemony, the "Special Section" of the title was an ad-hoc judicial apparatus set up by the government in complete contradiction of French legal principles in order to resentence, to death, men who had already been condemned for political crimes but given lighter sentences. A Resistance group had just gunned down a German officer, the Germans were demanding payment in French blood, and from the Vichy point of view—under the German gun—rather than have the Nazis grab the first dozen Frenchmen they found in the street and execute them in reprisal, it seemed preferable to execute people who had at least been guilty of *something*. Ransacking their jails, they chose, of course, Communists and Socialists.

Make no mistake, Vichy's "Special Section" was a shaming blemish in the history of the French judiciary. But millions were dying. French lives were at stake. Who should live? Who should die? It is a story filled with the ominous, bitter taste of the period, but has no hard, driving action, no suspense, its interest residing in the dark complexities of human nature. It is quite beyond the talents of Costa-Gavras. In his movie we learn that evil men are evil, and good men are good—although even this notorious historical episode is not spared the usual Costa-Gavras "improvements." The chief historical prisoner executed to please the Germans was a Communist. But the French still have a vague recollection that from 1939 to 1941 French Communists did everything they could to impede the war effort against Germany—Communist party leader Maurice Thorez actually deserting from the army—and it was only when "the Motherland" (i.e., the Soviet Union) had been attacked that they joined battle. Consequently Costa-Gavras converted the Communist prisoner to a Socialist prisoner.

For thirteen years now—since *Z*—Costa-Gavras has made only one film which has not been a political tract, *Clair de Femme*, drawn from the novel by the late Romain Gary, ex-husband of the late Jean Seberg. The entire film is spent following the grieving hero (once again, Yves Montand) while his wife, terminally ill (and whom we never see), takes her own life. As is often the case with directors whose strong suit is fast-paced "action" movies, Costa-Gavras, when he attempts grave introspection in *Clair de Femme* (literally "Woman Light"), becomes unbearably sentimental. The picture was made before the suicides of either Romain Gary or Jean Seberg (Miss Seberg, peculiarly enough, taking an overdose of barbiturates the night she saw the film). Its only political note—absent in the novel—is an unattractive portrayal of Paris's "White" Russian colony.

For some time Costa-Gavras has had a Latin American connection. His wife, Michèle Rey, former Chanel model and *Paris-Match* reporter, became well-known for her efforts to secure the diary of Che

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Guevara from the Bolivian military on behalf of the rich Italian publisher Giangiacomo Feltrinelli —soon to blow himself to kingdom come as an activist leader of Italy's Red Brigades. As anyone knows who has read Guevara's diary, the Communist parties of Latin America, and presumably Moscow, were quite hostile in the mid-60's to peasant-based guerrilla warfare in that part of the world. It was a Guevaran heresy. Terrorism, however, particularly in its newest and most glamorous form, "urban" terrorism, was a different matter. In 1968, Raúl Sendic of Uruguay, leader of that well-to-do young band of lawyers, doctors, bankers, architects, engineers, and teachers who were soon to be known to the world as the Tupamaros, met with Fidel Castro in Havana, and before long his people were training in Cuba.

In their early days the Tupamaros had gone in for Robin Hood-like activities, hijacking a supermarket truck and distributing the food free in a poor neighborhood, for example, but all that was to change. In 1970 they moved into high gear with a spectacular, savage, brutal campaign of terrorism, the first major terrorist campaign in modern Latin American history.

Up to this point, it should be noted, Uruguay had been a model of social democracy. Tiny, with a population of only 3 million, racially homogenous, it had no miserable, destitute underclass, virtually the entire working class being unionized. Uruguay's economy was in a bad phase, with hyperinflation, but literacy was high, infant mortality low. Its health service was the best in Latin America. Its social-welfare system, the oldest in the world after Sweden's. In fact, Uruguay was sometimes called "the Sweden of Latin America."

The Tupamaros killed, bombed, burned, kidnapped for ransom. By 1971 they held the all-time cumulative record for diplomatic kidnappings. They attacked police stations, broadcasting studios, telephone exchanges, blew up public buildings, homes, shops, cars, killing with increasingly audacious selectivity: high officials of the government, military, police. In Uruguay's last free election, in 1971, the Tupamaros-backed Communist-front party was trounced by four to one, and soon tens of thousands were demonstrating in the streets of Montevideo against the Tupamaros terror. The government had been reacting with intermittent authoritarian measures for years, but in mid-1972 it struck. The National Assembly declared a "state of internal war," in effect turning power over to the military, which did exactly what one would expect military forces humiliated by terrorists and facing a national crisis of confidence to do: martial law, arrests, torture. Peace came, the peace of the cemetery.

Today, ten years later, the semi-military regime of Uruguay makes no pretensions whatever to legality. A dozen newspapers have been closed. There are no Tupamaros, but neither are there any investigative reporters or any investigating committees of the National Assembly. In fact, there is no National Assembly. From 1968 through the end of 1974 some 15 percent of the total population of Uruguay (and a much larger percentage of its economically active population) fled the country. This was not entirely the Tupamaros' doing, of course, but they certainly did their bit, and, looking back, all in all, it is hard to convince oneself that the Tupamaros earned a golden place in history as benefactors of their country. And yet in 1973, with almost all civil liberties liquidated in Uruguay along with the Tupamaros, Costa-Gavras and his screenwriter, an active member of the Italian Communist party named Franco Solinas, brought out their *State of Siege*—an ode to the glory of these same Tupamaros and the most unabashedly pro-terrorist feature film ever made anywhere.

IT IS curious to observe how Costa-Gavras's attitude toward terrorism shifts from *Z* to *State of Siege*. In *Z* the terrorists who assassinate the pro-Communist Lambrakis are abominable people, real animals. But in *State of Siege* the terrorists who kidnap and kill the American policeman Dan Mitrione are truly wonderful human beings, so life-loving in their manner, and so regretful when they have to put a bullet into Mitrione's brain, that some less attentive members of the audience might be forgiven if they don't quite realize these are terrorists at all, perhaps mistaking them for Essenes, or followers of Saint Francis of Assisi, lacking only the broom to sweep insects from their path.

The movie subject is the spectacular coup that launched the Tupamaros' major drive in 1970 and placed them, at one stroke, in the big league of terrorism. In July of that year, members of Uruguay's Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (Tupamaros) simultaneously abducted from their homes in Montevideo U.S. police adviser Dan Mitrione (Yves Montand; Mitrione's name is changed in the film to Philip Santore) and Brazilian Consul Aloysio Mares Dias Gomide (renamed Fernando Campos B.). The goal of the abduction was to secure the release of leftist leaders in prison. When the Uruguayan president refused categorically to bargain with the kidnappers, the Tupamaros abducted still another American, AID agronomist Claude Fly (renamed "Mr. Snow").

The Uruguayan police then unleashed a tremendous manhunt, pulling in, among many others, Tupamaros leader Raúl Sendic himself. The kidnappers, under pressure now, announced that unless the leftist prisoners were freed Mitrione would be killed. The Uruguayan government, after consultation with Washington, stood firm. And a few hours later Mitrione's dead body was found stuffed into a 1948 Chevrolet convertible.

On these bare bones of the story, abduction, threats, assassination, *State of Siege* is accurate. It is when it gets into the meaning of it all that the film presents its heavy thinking—and when the historical record doesn't seem to support Costa-Gavras's position, he distorts and indulges in audacious inventions at every turn.

First, the dead hand of Marxism. It is advanced as axiomatic in the film that the United States holds Uruguay in thrall as an economic vassal to enrich the American capitalist class. That's what it's all about. As members of the Uru-

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guayan cabinet move from their limousines to the presidential palace, the voice of one of the Tupamaros recites their numerous corporate connections. The Economic Minister is president of four corporations, two of them American. The Minister of Foreign Affairs represents the Rockefeller interests, etc., etc. Much of the film is spent in "People's" interrogations of the hostages in their "People's" prison, sessions which set forth much of the film's dialectical burden. At one point a Tupamaros interrogator declares to the elderly AID agronomist: "Whether it's by drinking beer, swallowing aspirin, brushing his teeth, cooking in an aluminum pan, using a refrigerator, or heating a room . . . every day, every citizen of my country contributes to the development of your economy." U.S. avarice and malignity are everywhere.

This dire analysis was carried to an interesting height in an interview given by Costa-Gavras and Solinas in Paris after completion of the film. Even Claude Fly's reports on Uruguay's agriculture, Costa-Gavras explained solemnly, "could help bring about certain changes, but also—and above all—provide the United States with information on the country's agricultural situation." When asked what the U.S. would do with information of such an occult nature, Solinas, chiming in, suggested that Fly's reports "would give a particular direction to the country's economy, indeed the direction most useful to the United States and the American economy." On how Washington would proceed from the receipt of an AID report to the landing of the Marines if the Uruguayans refused to plant soy beans, neither Solinas nor Costa-Gavras felt it necessary to elaborate.

In actual fact, as opposed to this tissue of imaginative fiction dreamed up by our creative film-makers, there happened to be extremely little direct U.S. investment in Uruguay. As Mark Falcoff pointed out in his article, "The Uruguay That Never Was,"* at the time of the Mitrione case Uruguay had not been exactly a bonanza for overseas investment capital from the U.S. or any other country for many years. There was too much state control, state ownership, state interference in the economy—and that going back to World War I. Uruguay was a South American welfare state with an oversized bureaucracy, and not even big enough to be interesting in itself, large U.S. concerns preferring to base their operations in Argentina or Brazil.

As for American industrialists enriching themselves from all the U.S. beer, aspirin, toothpaste, and aluminum pans that these 3 million Uruguayans were consuming, a glance at Uruguay's foreign-trade figures for 1968 are revealing (in percentages):

Western Europe	47
Latin America	21
United States	17

So much for clutching poor Uruguayans in our despotic grip so they will buy our beer and aspirin. When facts like this are thrown at Costa-Gavras, he immediately begins to whine that Uruguay is just a "metaphor" (we will hear this again when it comes to Chile and *Missing*). "Uruguay is not the main character," he said in the interview, with Franco Solinas declaring that "for us, the general theme of the processes of imperialism was more important than the history of a single country."

But in this movie, if Uruguay is a metaphor, it is a very literal one. A portrait of Artigas, Uruguay's national hero, is in every government office. We see real Montevideo license plates on the automobiles, hear the names of real Montevideo districts in the police calls, as well as seeing Montevideo's real airport, Carrasco.

A skeptical person might suspect, given the fact that his movies are suggested by real historical events, that Costa-Gavras attempts to exploit the authority of realistic detailing to cloak gross fictions in the movies' substance. Indeed, at the most revealing moment of the same joint interview, Solinas made a statement which seemed to imply that he and Costa-Gavras might not believe their beer-and-aspirin line themselves, even as a metaphor. "From a political point of view," Solinas said, "the basic problem of our epoch is actually the role of the policeman which the United States plays in the entire world."

Here he was not talking about beer and aspirin, you will notice, but about the so-called containment policy. Concerning his native Italy, Solinas added that the United States—"through the usual diplomatic channels, through NATO, the secret services, the machinations and provocations organized directly or through intermediaries"—always moved to oppose "the advance of the broad masses of the people." Costa-Gavras quite agreed, adding that "to take apart and explain this mechanism in Latin America, Vietnam, or Europe is in effect the same thing."

It is too bad, for those Americans building a case that Costa-Gavras is a humanist, an aesthete, or perhaps a mystic, that he and his friends keep saying things like this when abroad. And reporters and critics well disposed toward him in the American press are often constrained simply not to report what he says, to protect him from himself, as it were.

For it is a slightly warped inheritance from the age of the late Senator Joseph McCarthy that for a quarter of a century now it has somehow been "bad taste" to mention a man's political beliefs—when they are of the far Left—even when he himself shouts them from the rooftops. Costa-Gavras's and Solinas's remarks about the U.S. role as a *policeman*, halting the advances of the broad masses of the people in Latin America, Vietnam, Europe, and everywhere, would seem to imply that they know perfectly well that American interests in Uruguay are not economic, but strategic—and that they oppose them on those grounds. Now when two men team up to make a movie whose clear goal is to attack the strategic policy of the United States, and one of these men is an open member of the Communist party and another a Marxist who tells the whole wide world that he believes

* *Journal of Latin American Lore*, II, 2 (1976).

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the Soviet Union's system is obviously superior to our own, then it seems to me not entirely irrelevant to point all this out. It is not, I grant you, the American way.

I have not yet revealed *State of Siege*'s *pièce de résistance*. For even with people far less saintly than the film shows the Tupamaros to be, it is hard to see how extreme amounts of force-feeding of beer, aspirin, toothpaste, and even aluminum pans could justify an assassination. The answer is not long in coming. Santore-Mitrione is a torturer. He gives courses in how to torture people at the International Police Academy. We see it all in flashback, with Santore traveling around with his electrical torture set in a special packing case, teaching the Uruguayans how to torture. And Costa-Gavras has proof, too. Police torture increased while Dan Mitrione was in Uruguay. On the other hand, terrorism also increased while Dan Mitrione was in Uruguay. Perhaps this is another one of Costa-Gavras's metaphors. If not, we are seriously being asked to believe that American know-how was required to teach Latin Americans such a primitive technique as torture.

How anyone acquainted with the history of Latin America, from the Conquistadors on down, could think for one second that these people would need instruction in these matters from a cop from Indiana is hard to imagine. The Duke of Wellington was once approached by a man with the words, "Mr. Smith, I believe?" Wellington said then, and I say now: "If you can believe that, you can believe anything."

In 1973, for the special gala opening of the new movie theater at the Kennedy Center in Washington before an official government audience, George Stevens, head of the American Film Institute, chose Costa-Gavras's *State of Siege*. A preliminary screening produced an absolute uproar, and the gala showing was canceled.

One of the most extraordinary aspects of the whole making of *State of Siege* is how Costa-Gavras —with democratic government quite obliterated in Uruguay as a result of Tupamaros terrorism—remained smugly convinced that Tupamaros terrorism in general and the Mitrione killing in particular were highly beneficial developments.

Back in his luxurious duplex in Paris near the Seine, drawing his information from I know not where, he declared resoundingly that "the Tupamaros opened a path which has gotten results on the politico-military terrain of armed struggle." (If getting wiped out is a result, I suppose this is a true statement.) "In fact," Costa-Gavras continued firmly, "there has been a profound change in the people's political consciousness." The beneficial aspects of this change, as I have intimated, might be easier to discern from Paris than from Montevideo. But sometimes actions yield unexpected benefits. *State of Siege*, for example, might have raised the political consciousness of George Stevens.

In 1973 a young American named Charles Horman was killed in Chile during the coup d'état of General Augusto Pinochet. Costa-Gavras's latest film, *Missing*, sets out to prove that the United States engineered the Pinochet coup, and that it ordered or condoned the execution of Charles Horman because he "knew too much."

The report of the Senate committee chaired by Frank Church found "no evidence" that the United States had been directly involved in the 1973 coup in Chile. Seymour Hersh, who has done many investigations of Chile and was the first journalist to publish stories on the CIA's efforts to prevent Allende's coming to power in 1970, says he investigated Charles Horman's disappearance and found no evidence of United States involvement in either the disappearance or the Pinochet coup. In 1977, four years after Charles Horman's death, his widow, father, and mother brought a $4.5 million damage suit against Henry Kissinger and ten other U.S. government officials, holding them responsible. But, still another four years after that, having failed to advance the slightest shred of evidence to support their charges, they petitioned the court to dismiss their case.

Costa-Gavras has no evidence either. He has only his famous instinct. Pressed, he argues inductively: Vietnam, Cambodia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador. But he doesn't conceal that he is proceeding from his intuition as an "artist." None of all this prevents him from opening his film with the outrageous legend: "THIS FILM IS BASED ON A TRUE STORY. THE INCIDENTS AND FACTS ARE DOCUMENTED." This is Costa-Gavras's style.

It should not be thought that Costa-Gavras did no research for this movie. He didn't read the Church report or the attorneys' briefs for *Joyce Horman et al* v. *Henry A. Kissinger et al.* But he met the Hormans, and he read a book, *The Execution of Charles Horman*, by Thomas Hauser.

Hauser is a young lawyer originally sought out by the Hormans to represent them, but who wrote the book instead. As the title suggests, it is a somewhat tendentious book, almost as one-sided as a Costa-Gavras screenplay. But not quite. For example, in the movie, *Missing*, Charles Horman is presented as a sweet, sunny, harmless type—apolitical, of course. He is working on a picture book, *The Sunshine Grabbers*, most of whose characters seem to be ducks. He is a little bohemian perhaps, but obviously just an overgrown kid. He and his American friends in Santiago put out a little underground sheet, but when his father later asks his daughter-in-law if it's a "radical" publication she answers reprovingly, "Oh, Ed!," meaning it is not a radical publication. But we learn from reading Hauser's book that this little publication contained news for Chileans about the American "antiwar" movement and "U.S. activities in Chile"; that it was Joyce Horman, not her husband, who was working on the duck project; and that Charles Horman was maced at Grand Park in Chicago in 1968 and was a one-time correspondent for the *Nation*.

Now if Charles Horman had been shown in the film as a young American radical, attracted to Chile by its Marxist leadership and working against the government of his own country, a certain fraction of the movie audience might have

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thought he wasn't such an innocent bystander, and another fraction (unjustly of course) might even have thought he got what was coming to him. And Costa-Gavras couldn't have that.

Another interesting detail disclosed by the book is the parent-child relationship. The movie would have us believe that there is a rather severe generation gap between Charles Horman (John Shea) and at least his father, Ed (Jack Lemmon). Ed is portrayed as a very conservative businessman type, highly critical of his son's and his daughter-in-law's "sloppy idealism." He is no doubt given this markedly conservative personality so that, when we are shown that even a man like *this* realizes his country is evil, we know it simply must be true. With this in mind, it was very interesting to come upon the following quotation in the book, attributed to Charles Horman's mother: "You see, Chile is not going to be an isolated incident. Italy and France will elect Marxist governments sometime in the future. Other Western countries will follow. We can't be allowed to do to them what we did in Chile."

Since almost every country in Western Europe has had Socialist or Socialist-coalition governments at one time or another without causing too much of a stir, I assume that when Mrs. Edmund Horman of New York City says "Marxist" she means (and knows she means) Communist. A passage like this tells a lot about not only where the Horman family is coming from, as they say, but where it's going to. For the time being the U.S. is evil in Latin America. Europe comes later.

THE central scene in *Missing* takes place at Viña del Mar on the Chilean coast. (Chile, another "metaphor," is not mentioned by name in the film.) Charles Horman and a family friend, Terry Simon (Melanie Mayron), have taken the bus to the seacoast for the day, Charles's wife, Beth (Sissy Spacek), having been detained in Santiago. When Charles and Terry try to return to the capital, they are told no buses are running. All night long, blocked in Viña, they hear small-arms fire and the din of hovering helicopters. In the morning they discover that there has been a coup d'état and the country is under martial law, roads sealed off, telephones cut.

Stranded, they congregate with other Americans, a surprising number of whom are staying at their hotel. Charles gets into conversation with one of them, a retired naval engineer named Creter. Smiling wickedly, Creter says, "I came down to do a job, and now she's done." Charles instantly concludes he is talking to a CIA man down to set up the coup d'état. And when Creter adds that he is based in Panama, where he "keeps an eye on things," and that he soon expects to go to Bolivia, which doesn't even have a navy, this idea becomes cast in concrete. "I can't believe he said that!" Charles tells Terry in a high state of excitement. "I can't believe he said that!"

The actor who plays Creter (very well), does his role in such a way as to lead the audience, too, to think he is a covert-action operative. But the audience is never told that in reality joint naval maneuvers, including units from the U.S., Chile, Peru, and Ecuador, were about to begin off Viña, which might explain shore-based naval personnel (or, for that matter, that inland Bolivia has a modest navy, on Lake Titicaca).

But mainly I find it wildly implausible that a deep-cover CIA man, in Chile on the darkest and direst of covert operations, the overthrowing of a peaceful government, would blab his mouth off to the first American kid he meets. A few humdrum facts, falling into an overheated mind, seem far more likely to have produced the real Charles Horman's electrifying conclusion. But the entire logic of *Missing* hangs on the tenuous thread of Charles's being privy to U.S. participation in the Pinochet coup. He is shortly seized by the Chilean police and disappears, never to be seen alive again. And we are asked to believe that it is the United States that wanted to do away with Charles Horman because he has *found out* that the U.S. had staged the coup. Why the U.S. didn't have its Chilean minions execute Terry Simons as well (since she knew everything he did) we are never told.

It is a harsh thing to have to point out, but in revolutionary situations, when thousands are dying, it doesn't take much to get yourself killed. Many innocent people are stood in front of a wall and shot. The wrong friends, obstreperousness, indignation—the wall. And that's it. There is every likelihood that this, sadly, is how Charles Horman died.

In any event, I find hysterical cries of, "They're killing Americans! They're killing Americans!" quite obscene in a movie by a man whose last film about Latin America celebrated the killing of a U.S. citizen as an act of the highest virtue. Of course, Costa-Gavras *told* us that Santore-Mitrione was a torturer. But I wouldn't take Costa-Gavras's word on anything.

THE most connected series of events in *Missing* is Ed Horman's search for his son. Ed (Lemmon) arrives in Santiago a prosperous, conventional, middle-aged American with a normal respect for his country's diplomatic and consular officers, whose assistance he naturally seeks. At the start he sharply criticizes his daughter-in-law Beth's bitterly cynical attitude toward the U.S. officials, but gradually, step by step (a good performance), he comes to share her views.

Sissy Spacek's performance as Beth, on the other hand, is decidedly peculiar. From the first scene in which we see them together she is openly insulting to the American diplomats who are at least nominally helping them with their search. Even if she suspects them of deception, they are, after all, the only people who could at least theoretically be of assistance. Beth acts, in fact, as if she already knows the movie's end—which affirms as clearly as is possible in a dramatic form that the United States was involved in Charles's murder. Ed Horman, the film's *raisonneur*, declares in a ringing tone to the American ambassador that the Chileans wouldn't dare execute a U.S. citizen "unless an American official co-signed a kill order!" But if even at the beginning Beth suspects this, it means

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she also suspects her husband is dead, and one would expect a hint of mourning in Sissy Spacek's performance. There is none. Miss Spacek is so obsessed with playing a woman convinced of the wickedness of her own government that she has no energy left to play a woman mourning a dead husband.

This is partly her own fault (it anyway being a cardinal sin for an actress to act at the beginning as if she knows the end), but of course also that of the director, who, knowing he has a weak case, attempts to strengthen it by urging his performers, at least, to act as if they believe it.

The Hormans' case, in truth, was so weak it was pathetic, which is why they petitioned to have it dismissed. When Thomas Hauser was called upon to make a deposition under oath in the case of *Joyce Horman et al.* v. *Henry A. Kissinger et al.*, he expressed himself in a somewhat different style from the one he employed when writing his book. Asked for the basis of Ed Horman's assertion that the U.S. government had ordered the execution of his son, Hauser said Horman "was relying primarily on what Charles and Terry had seen in Viña del Mar . . . the lack of caring and the runaround he had gotten from embassy officials in Santiago and . . . on a New York *Post* article which he had read shortly after his return to New York."

In their brief for the government, U.S. attorneys Ruff, Lamberth, and Kragis wrote that the Hormans had not made the slightest attempt to prove their case, not even questioning the defendants, and that the basis of the suit was "nothing more than pure suspicion and distrust of defendants" joined to a desire to criticize U.S. foreign policy. They added: "Whether based upon frustration, paranoia, or understandable grief and despair, suspicion and distrust alone simply cannot support a lawsuit." The Hormans, as I say, petitioned for dismissal of their own suit.

Not that they were happy about it. Oh, claimed Ed Horman, if only he had been shown the limited excisions from those 26 classified documents the affair would have been as big as Watergate! In fact, three high officers of the Carter administration, not even in power at the time of the coup—Secretary of State Edmund Muskie, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, and CIA Director Stansfield Turner—all reviewed the documents personally and swore under oath that they contained no unknown information about the death of Charles Horman. So, you can go with Muskie, Brown, and Turner or you can go with Ed Horman's instincts, which strangely resemble Costa-Gavras's instincts.

And now the Hormans have their movie. The embassy officials delegated to help Ed Horman in his search for his son, described by Hauser in his book as "cold, pasty-faced bureaucrats," are shown in the film to be callous, dissembling, and obviously deceitful. Instructed by the director to act as if they're lying, the actors, not surprisingly, do a highly professional job of acting as if they're lying.

It would be hard to tell this from *Missing*, but after the Pinochet coup a small staff of U.S. embassy officials secured the release of 17 Americans, checked on the welfare of 600 others, and reported to their families in the United States. In all, only two were killed, Horman and a friend and associate on his pro-Allende publication.

The only other "evidence" evinced to support the Horman case by the Costa-Gavras movie (where the rules of evidence are more lax than in a court of law, not to say nonexistent), is Ed Horman's discovery of a Chilean security officer who has taken refugee in the Italian embassy.

Actually, when he was in Chile Ed Horman did not meet Raphael González (his real name), who only sought refuge in the Italian embassy two years later. González was interviewed by two journalists a year after that, and then repeatedly by U.S. officials, all several years after Ed Horman had returned to New York. Horman met González much later. The key elements of González's statements were that he had caught a glimpse of Charles Horman at security headquarters shortly after the Pinochet coup and heard him sentenced by a Chilean army officer—while in the next room stood a silent man he took to be a U.S. official from his clothing and the way he tied his shoes. González claimed the CIA had sought to recruit him, had persecuted him, and kidnapped and attempted to hypnotize his wife. Slightly bizarrely, he had also written a letter to General Pinochet charging that the highest levels of the Pinochet government were infiltrated by a homosexual mafia. None of this is in the film, of course, which is too bad, because the full González story could have given it a lot of pizzazz.

FILM critics, though journalists, often know very little of public affairs and tend to be quite supine before factual allegations about the real world presented to them in such a compelling art form as the cinema. They tend to believe in what has euphemistically been called "a purely cinematograhic culture," meaning they can learn everything of importance about life from merely seeing movies. They usually do not recognize a didactic film when they see one, particularly if it shares their own attitudes, which are generally Left-liberal. They almost never check out a movie's facts in books or the press, and often do not read the news columns of their own publications. A film critic who plows through the press material handed out to him in a movie's press kit might well think of himself as having done some rather heavy research.

I therefore noted with some interest that the press manual for *Missing* (a nearly $10 million movie produced by a major Hollywood studio) led off with a hymn of praise to the Chile of Salvador Allende Gossens—a Marxist, a friend of Castro's Cuba and of other Communist regimes, engaged in a large-scale nationalization program in an attempt (in the words of the *New Columbia Encyclopedia*) "to turn Chile into a socialist state."

We are told in the press manual that in the first year of the Allende regime Chile's gross national product tripled, inflation was much reduced, and the infant mortality rate dropped sharply. The manual does not tell us, however, that Allende had inherited a trade surplus

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from the preceding regime of $300 million, nor that the initial growth in GNP was hugely exaggerated by a boom in the world price of copper. In Allende's three years, the gross domestic growth went from 8 percent, to 1.6 percent, to *minus* 5.7 percent. The inflation rate, which in the first year did indeed come down from 35 percent to 22 percent, went the next year to 163 percent, and in 1973—the year of the Pinochet coup—to an apocalyptic 508 percent. As for infant mortality per 1,000 births, Allende brought it down from 79 percent to 65 percent. But Pinochet has brought it from 65 percent to under 38 percent. How many film critics were expected to run down figures like that? The answer, apparently: none.

THE press reaction to *Missing* came in two phases: before and after an article in the New York *Times* attacking the movie's veracity.

In the first phase, with painfully few exceptions (notably *Time* magazine), the critics raved. The *Wall Street Journal*'s reviewer, Joy Gould Boyum, swallowed the film whole. It was "based on a well-researched, responsible account by an attorney," she wrote, and the movie itself "keeps strikingly close to the facts. . . ." Accompanied by statements like this, her account of the story reads, indeed, like plain fact: "What Ed Horman discovers . . . is chilling. American officials have been lying to him: despite their denials, his son has indeed been executed by the junta. . . . For Ed Horman this adds up to a shocking and persuasive proof not only of U.S. involvement in the Chilean coup but for American complicity in his son's death. Exaggerated? Slanted? One would like to think so."

There is more: an ordinary man "suddenly being victimized by the brutality and injustice of his own government's policies." (One would never guess that the Horman family's suit was withdrawn for lack of evidence.)

Curiously, Mrs. Boyum mentions Costa-Gavras's *State of Siege* without seeming to hold it against him. Perhaps she thinks that the murder of Dan Mitrione by terrorists was clement and just. The films of Costa-Gavras "force the audience to question what is happening in the world outside," Mrs. Boyum writes. *Missing* is "emotionally devastating." She ends her review with a tangled passage which seems to reprove us for remaining home "complacent" and "oblivious" while such things are going on.

I quote Mrs. Boyum at such unaccustomed length because of the absolutely enormous use made of her review in the film's ad campaign. For if the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* think that an endorsement from their critic for a film like this is of little significance, Universal Pictures politely disagrees. *Missing* is an elegy to a Marxist regime which expropriated huge American copper interests with no compensation. The U.S. ambassador, in the film, says he is there to protect the interests of 3,000 American firms (actually there were no more than 150). *Missing* affirms that the U.S. engineered the Pinochet coup, clearly in defense of American business interests. Now the *Wall Street Journal* is thought to have the welfare of the American business community very much at heart, and if the reviewer from the *Journal* gave *Missing* a clean bill of health. . . . The ads from Universal saturated the country.

The article in the New York *Times* was a small bombshell. Written by Flora Lewis, that paper's foreign-affairs columnist, it did Costa-Gavras untold damage, at least as a teller of true stories. A friend of mine lamented that the article had only run in the *Times*'s entertainment section (on the front page of the Sunday edition, Section 2), but was consoled when I told him that was the only part of the paper that movie critics could be depended on to read.

And, indeed, following Miss Lewis's article, the critics and commentators scrambled in every direction. Some said that, well, the material was controversial but the film was High Art. Others said Chile was just a metaphor, so what if the film was inaccurate—how about El Salvador? But the third group, my favorite, said the film may well have been completely false historically, but it represented the Horman family's genuine "feeling." Why does a movie have to be true? Why can't you base a film on a feeling?

Just to test this hypothesis, I can imagine someone getting the "feeling" that Martin Luther King (to take a far-fetched example) had an ongoing connection with the KGB. I wonder how the movie-reviewing community would receive a film based on this feeling. In any case, even after Miss Lewis's article, not many critics climbed down completely. I didn't see any reviews that said: as a matter of fact, this film is junk. But Andrew Sarris of the *Village Voice*, I must say, saved the honor of the profession. The caption accompanying his review gives an inkling of his gist: "Costa-Gavras: an ancestral grudge against the Truman Doctrine?"

AT THIS point it is hard to tell just how well *Missing* will do commercially. Universal is pouring a lot of money into advertising, thanks in part to the kind endorsement of the *Wall Street Journal*. The furor over El Salvador might play a part.

But the essence of it all is contained in an anti-American joke of Communist provenance that used to be quite popular in left-wing Paris intellectual circles. I have already cited the form in which Costa-Gavras used it in the dialogue of *Z*, but I remember it in a slightly different version. Question: "Should you always blame the Americans even when you don't know what they've done?" Answer: "Yes. Because *they* know." If there are a lot of young Americans who feel now the way French Communists did—that the United States is evil incarnate, no proof required—then *Missing* ought to have a pretty good run.

I will make one confident prediction about Costa-Gavras. If *Missing* is a great success, and he comes to live in Beverly Hills, or Bel-Air, or Brentwood, in a grand house with sauna, swimming pool, and tennis court, he will give up forever calling himself a Sartrean Marxist. He is adaptable. He adapted from Greece to France, and he will adapt from France to America. He will learn American

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ways, and he will learn the American lingo. He will learn that it does not go over well here to talk about the obvious superiority of the Soviet system, even purified of that horrid "perversion," Stalinism. And he will learn that in America people of his cast of mind call themselves, if they have to call themselves anything, "anti-anti-Communist," or "progressive," or even "radical."

But these terms are getting to have a fusty sound now, and Costa-Gavras will sense this. So, if his movies are big hits, and he comes to live among us, I can see the day when Costa-Gavras will join the grand, generous mainstream of the American Left, and call himself, yea, a liberal.

Fiction

Saul Bellow's Winter of Discontent

Ruth R. Wisse

To judge from the photographs on their book jackets, most serious American writers of fiction have followed the trek to the suburbs and beyond, and now ply their craft in semi-rural or college settings. In their work the garden shows its season. Characters lose themselves on the golf course (Walker Percy) or in a snowstorm (Bernard Malamud). For those who commute, cities loom as a daily nightmare, or even an occasional haven, but never a central determinant of the pace or meaning of their lives. The cities have grown Dickensian, but there are not many writers with instincts urban enough to chart them (a fact for which readers, trying to make their own inner escape, may well be grateful).

To this trend Saul Bellow is a notable exception. He lives demonstratively in Chicago, the city of his youth, as do Charles Citrine, hero of his last novel but one, *Humboldt's Gift*, and Albert Corde, the hero of his latest, *The Dean's December*.* Even as he warns against the distractions of modern urban America, of the multiplying crises that make it so much harder to recognize the essential human decencies, Bellow does not withdraw his heroes from the harassment but instead exposes them to ever more and more of the *tuml*, the fraying noise.

From book to book, one has felt the deterioration of the cities. Conditions that once appeared desperate are now objects of nostalgia. The anxiety of Tommy Wilhelm in *Seize the Day*, coming down from the twenty-third floor to the lobby of his apartment hotel on the upper West Side of New York to collect the mail before breakfast, is almost pastorally wholesome compared with the fear of Mr. Sammler, threatened and attacked in the lobby of his apartment building in the same neighborhood, fourteen years later. And Sammler's situation of 1970, when compared with the blight in the present novel, radiates hopeful dignity. No wonder that Saul Bellow has now taken Eastern Europe for much of his setting. He has always tried to shore up, against even the bleakest events, some reserve of optimism: Bucharest may be the only angle from which he can still make a city like Chicago look habitable.

The Dean's December tells of two cities, in each of which it is the worst of times. Albert Corde, dean of students of a Chicago college, has accompanied his Rumanian-born wife to Bucharest, where her mother is dying. The recent earthquake damage is slowly being repaired, but nothing has yet cracked the oppressive Communist party control over personal lives. Corde tries to help his wife, a noted astronomer "unskilled in human dealings," through her grief, which is inflamed but also deflected by her anger at the despotic officials. Even death is an occasion for political manipulation, and the death of Corde's mother-in-law, a lapsed party minister whose daughter had defected to the West, is a moment for retroactive punishment, for "rubbing it in that nobody has any private rights." Trying to get through the mere mechanics of a last bedside vigil, cremation, and burial, the dean experiences not just the privation but the humiliation of life under Communism as he becomes for a moment its subject.

Meanwhile, he has left behind him in Chicago a wake of prob-

Ruth R. Wisse, *who teaches Yiddish literature at McGill University, is currently working on a book about American Yiddish writers. Her articles in* Commentary *include "Jewish Dreams," which appeared last month, "Philip Roth Then and Now" (September 1981), and "Reading About Jews" (March 1980).*

* Harper & Row, 312 pp., $13.95.

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lems. As college dean, he has pressed for action in the case of a white student for whose murder a black man and woman stand accused. His civic involvement in the case is complicated by family connections: the friendship between the accused and Corde's young nephew, a racist-in-reverse, who tries to intimidate prospective witnesses with charges of bias; and the engagement as defense attorney of Corde's unscrupulous cousin who feels most aggrieved against people like the dean, whom he has once successfully bilked. Corde's struggle for a legal redress of murder against the twin odds stacked against him—socio-psychological justification of evil on the one hand, a spirit of resignation in the face of blanket corruption on the other—is a struggle undertaken in the true spirit of American liberalism, as it once was. But in contrast to those in this novel who fight on the side of the accused, Corde can take little satisfaction in the prospect of victory.

A former journalist, the dean has also recently published, in *Harper's*, a two-part study of Chicago in which his attachment to the city takes the form of a harsh visionary reproach. The consequences of his public attack—for so it is perceived—follow the dean to Bucharest, then trail home after him as he tries to resume his normal affairs. He finally yields his position as dean, accepting the resignation that is forced on him, with the intention of continuing his own kind of political "journalism."

THIS is in many ways the kind of book we have come to expect and to hope for from Bellow—a study of an engaged American whose conscious deliberation over the life he leads is informative, entertaining, useful. No English writer since James Joyce is so given to plenitude, to such an inclusive ambition for fiction. Bellow takes all of life for his subject, from philosophic speculations on its origins to the precise pattern of tapes across the face of a stroke victim hooked to the machines of an intensive care unit, plus everything in between: men and women, parents and children, brothers and sisters and cousins and nephews and aunts, enemies and friends, governments and citizens or subjects, murderers and victims and lawyers and judges and jailers, scientists and humanists, waiters and ambassadors, dogs and cats and rats, flowers and galaxies, classics and restaurant menus. In Bucharest, the dean's temporary suspension from his ordinary circumstances allows him, as with many of Bellow's heroes similarly suspended, to think and feel with special intensity, with heightened urgency.

To the normal abundance of Bellow's fiction, this novel adds a political study in contrasts between Communism and democracy as practiced in Rumania and the United States. In the first, individual life is so severely circumscribed that even the most unexceptional actions must be matters of risk. Attending a funeral, escorting a visitor around the local sights, lighting candles by the bedside of a dying Catholic, passing down family heirlooms, all of these are attended by danger, signifying as they do loyalties, interests, beliefs, and initiatives that challenge the totalitarian grasp of the state. In the dean's helpless sympathy for these sparks of self-assertion, Bellow has captured the mood of so many of us, frustrated in our inability to help—today the Poles, then all those in line behind them, to a greater share in the freedoms that we accept as the givens of life.

But the austerity of existence under Communism also casts into harsher than usual light the laxity of Americans, and what Bellow sees as the liberal credulity of the English-speaking world. Bellow's images in this novel of the wallowing underclass, of the decadent upper class, celebrating with sturgeon and champagne the birthday of a dog, and of those who could but don't labor to uphold civilization, are more judgmental than before. Like Albert Corde's description of Chicago, the novel is charged with prophetic stricture, as if things were too desperate for mere fiction, requiring the inspired rage of seers to stir men to action. In *Herzog* (1964) the hero scoffed, "We must get it out of our heads that this is a doomed time, that we are waiting for the end, and the rest of it, mere junk from fashionable magazines." Albert Corde is far less buoyant: he has written such an article of doom himself. His description of Chicago offers a shrill spectacle of blacks killing themselves off and whites retreating to the subterfuge of sociological abstractions to keep from noticing. The dean's own leap into the thick of action—pushing for justice, exposing public indifference—though more productive socially than Herzog's accumulation of unfinished letters, has resulted in a bleaker book.

The Dean's December is the coldest of Bellow's novels. Winter is its season. The African violets are left to die in the Chicago apartment, and in the frigid gloom of Bucharest the dean develops a fascination for cyclamens that flourish in cold. Even in the movable island of the marriage that unites the American husband with his Rumanian wife there is a troubling formality, as if the hero were always damping the flames of his ardor along with his other emotions. The wife's professional attendance on the stars threatens to lift her entirely out of the human sphere. In the eye of the telescope to which she ascends in the concluding section of the novel, Corde feels the cold touch of astral space, "its power to cancel everything merely human." And despite his discomfort up there in the cold he admits that he almost prefers it to the life he must reenter below. It is strange that Bellow's most active protagonist since Henderson the Rain King should feel himself so chill in the universe.

The novel is intentionally disturbing. The intimate description of Rumania, a country that is often mistakenly described in the West as an exception to the Communist crush, makes the reader confront what Corde complains Americans avoid—the catastrophic outlook:

> We are used to peace and plenty, we are for everything nice and against cruelty, wickedness, craftiness, monstrousness. Worshippers of progress, its dependents, we are unwilling to reckon with vil-

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lainy and misanthropy, we reject the *horrible*—the same as saying we are anti-philosophical. Our outlook requires the assumption that each of us is at heart trustworthy, each of us is naturally decent and wills the good. The English-speaking world is temperamentally like this.

After a few weeks in Rumania, the English-speaking temperament of the hero, at least, has visibly hardened.

Albert Corde's view of Chicago is equally disturbing. Against the tide of public corruption he describes, only two upright men are found to be taking a stand, a dedicated prison warden and an ex-junkie who runs a detoxification center—not much of a bulwark. Neither is Corde willing to accept neat "scientific" explanations for society's decline, such as the one offered to him by a local researcher who is convinced that lead poisoning is destroying the nervous system of inner-city dwellers, causing a decline in intelligence and a rise in crime. (Actually he milks this theory for its metaphoric, rather than its scientific, truth.) Since Bellow's Corde is an astute observer, without bogus faith or remedies, he does stir an anxiety in his readers, in us, beyond anything normally found in the "fashionable magazines."

But the book is also disturbing in unintentional ways. Its main problem, the complication that has temporarily jolted the hero, is his impulsive entry into the political arena. What, he asks himself, was the real intention of those articles he wrote on Chicago? "The *high* intention," he answers, was "to prevent the American idea from being pounded into dust altogether." Corde has not only a sure grasp of that American idea, but an equally firm understanding of what is causing its decline and what must be done to reverse the situation: "In the American moral crisis, the first requirement was to experience what was happening and to see what must be seen." Seen, Corde means, in the thickly substantiated, inspired representation of the artist, not through the flattening distortions, the false consciousness, of mass communication. The writer, through his clear and discriminating portraits—here of Chicago—can reawaken in us a sense of responsibility for our actual existence. Albert Corde is thus an intellectual's version of the Western sheriff, who rides in with pen blazing to clean up the town and restore it to moral health.

The trouble is not just that Saul Bellow himself shows through this thin disguise of Albert Corde, as several critics have already observed, but that we are given little ground for assessing the very large claims made for the articles in *Harper's*, not to mention the claims made for the artist as the necessary guardian of our trust. Is it at all credible that a single piece of writing, even one as powerful as this is said to be, should propel its author to instant celebrity, filter so deeply into the consciousness of readers that they can remember and quote back passages verbatim, shake the political status quo, and finally lose the author his job? And even if all that were possible, is it right that such works should become, as Bellow and as Corde intend them to become, the touchstones of our lives as citizens? A Chicago writer of conscience, even if he is Saul Bellow himself, cannot be a Solzhenitsyn, need not be a Solzhenitsyn, if only because in America the political process absorbs and generates at least as much creative and moral energy as literature.

Bellow appears to have anticipated a certain criticism of his hero, because he has preemptively introduced it into the novel. Toward the conclusion of the book a long, slighting profile of Corde by an envious childhood friend, now a syndicated columnist, is quoted in full. The professional journalist shrugs off the literary amateur with damning praise of his elitism, sensitivity, refinement. Bellow may have been drawing for the tone of this piece on reviews of his own foray into political journalism, the wonderful book *To Jerusalem and Back*, which was greeted in some quarters by just this quality of unwarranted condescension. He is certainly right to insist that Corde's political analysis, and his own, are at least as informed and responsible as those of the self-appointed pundits. But he is not right to insist they be judged by separate criteria.

It may be true, as Corde and Bellow believe, that only the artist can make us apprehend reality in a humanly meaningful way, but surely he does so whether his subject is politics or the enlarged joint in the elbow of his mother-in-law.

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Books in Review

From Marx to Robert Moses

ALL THAT IS SOLID MELTS INTO AIR: THE EXPERIENCE OF MODERNITY. By MARSHALL BERMAN. *Simon & Schuster. 384 pp. $17.50.*

Reviewed by HILTON KRAMER

THE role played by modernist culture in the radical movement of the 1960's, though often assumed to have been a significant one, has never really been clarified. Has it, indeed, ever really been studied? It was certainly a more ambivalent role than the intellectual champions of the movement could ever bring themselves to acknowledge. What, after all, had the tutelary deities of the counterculture of the 60's in common with Eliot or Stravinsky or Proust or Mondrian or Mies van der Rohe? It was not to the dour strains of Schoenberg's dodecaphonic compositions that the disciples of Timothy Leary turned on, as I recall, nor was either *Ulysses* or *Harmonium* the book most likely to be found in the backpacks of the antiwar protesters or under study in the communes of Vermont and Colorado.

To the extent that the literary and artistic avant-garde could be seen to foster an adversary attitude toward the institutions and the ethos of middle-class life, it was welcomed, to be sure, as an ally in the struggle to undermine "the system"—meaning, of course, bourgeois democracy—and the "repressive" cultural values that it was alleged to have engendered. But at the time of the movement's eruption in the 1960's this was by no means the way that modernist culture was being perceived by the radicals themselves.

For one thing, modernist culture was clearly understood to mean high culture—the culture of an educated elite—and toward the very existence of elite culture, modernist or otherwise, the ideologues of the radical movement adopted an attitude of extreme political hostility. The real "aesthetic" loyalties of the movement lay, in any case, in the realm of popular culture—in rock music, the "new" journalism, and the movies. High culture, to the extent that it was not rejected outright, had to be made to conform to the "popular" values it had always opposed. Thus it became one of the imperative tasks of the movement's intellectuals—especially those who spoke in the name of high culture—to blur the kind of distinction that had traditionally been made between high culture and popular culture. This took some doing—the Beatles had to be treated as serious art-song composers, for example, and all sorts of moral and cultural benefits ascribed to the rising glut of pornographic trash—but the movement never lacked for gifted volunteers in this enterprise. The net effect, however, was not the enhancement of high culture but its degradation.

By the 1960's, moreover, modernist culture presented the radical movement with another problem. Modernism had clearly ceased to be avant-garde. It was taught in the schools, it dominated the museums, it was praised in the press, and it commanded a formidable system of public and private patronage. It was solidly established as part of the mainstream culture of the liberal middle class. It could therefore not be easily or permanently separated from the interests of that class. This constituted an immense difficulty for radicals who wished to perpetuate the myth of the modernist avant-garde as a revolutionary force, for it could no longer be seriously claimed that the objectives of modernist culture and those of the radical movement were really identical.

The truth is, of course, that radical movements tend sooner or later to be resolutely philistine and populist in their cultural programs. It is only within the free-wheeling culture of bourgeois societies that modernism has ever prospered for as long as a single generation without encountering real repression—the kind that makes artists and writers fear for their lives, and flee to safe bourgeois havens. Yet in the comfortable purlieus of these havens—it is quite another story elsewhere—the myth of some ideal compact binding modernist culture to the ideology of revolution survives unchanged and largely unchallenged. It persists as an object of piety even in an age that has seen modernism stripped of whatever radical functions it might once have been able to lay claim to, and today serves as a kind of ideological sanctuary for those intellectual survivors of the radical movement who are obliged to look to culture—especially the museum culture of modernism—to bind up their political wounds and assist them in adjusting to a permanent posture of professorial, risk-free dissidence.

It is upon precisely this piety that Marshall Berman, who is professor of political science at the City University of New York, has erected the bizarre tableaux that make up the bulk of his new book on "The Experience of Modernity." *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air,* being less a work of analysis than of fantasy and incantation, is a very difficult book to describe, but its purpose is nonetheless easily discerned. It is designed to offer the academic radical mind a refuge from the disappointments of the present in the promises and prophecies of the past.

Its ambitions are nothing if not large, for what it purports to give us is a comprehensive account of the historical relation that has obtained in the 19th and 20th centuries between the rise of cultural modernism, on the one hand, and the forces of social modernization, on the other—the relation, in short, between the avant-garde and bourgeois capitalism. It is out of both the creative and the destructive collision of these developments that there has arisen, according to Berman, the "experience of modern-

HILTON KRAMER, *formerly the chief art critic of the New York* Times, *is now the editor of the* New Criterion, *a monthly review which will begin publication in September.*

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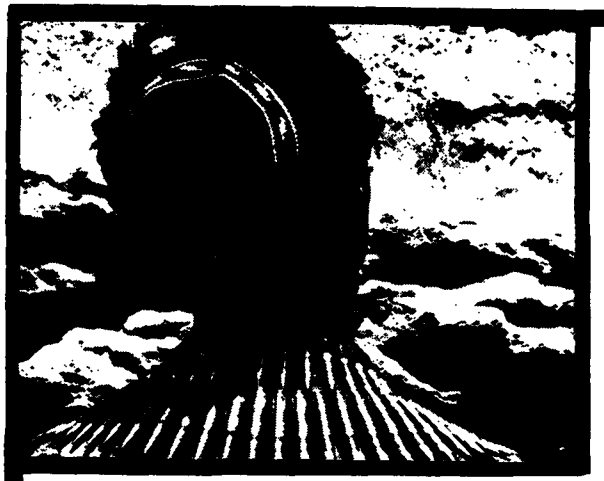

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ity." The book thus attempts to combine literary criticism, historical narrative, and sociological analysis in what is essentially a moral and highly moralistic critique of modern life. Baudelaire's poetry is related to Baron Haussmann's transformation of the Paris cityscape, Dostoevsky's fiction is set against the development of St. Petersburg as an urban center, and the author's own, rather less interesting sensibilities are defined in relation to Robert Moses's work in reconstructing various parts of New York City and Long Island, but especially the Bronx, where Berman grew up. It is Berman's view that the keys to the spirit of modernity are to be found, above all, in the writings of Goethe and Marx.

TRADITIONALLY, of course, radical ideology has been militantly forward-looking and "progressive," upholding the glories of the future against a benighted past and a dismal present. Berman reverses this stance. His focus is firmly on the glories of the past. "I want to bring the dynamic and dialectical modernism of the 19th century to life again," he declares in the introduction, and it is to this task that his book is more or less devoted. And while he makes the expected obeisances to the rhetoric of progressivism—"It may turn out, then, that going back can be a way to go forward: that remembering the modernisms of the 19th century can give us the vision and courage to create the modernisms of the 21st," etc.—it is clearly not the future that now holds much interest for him.

The past that is conjured up in the pages of this book is not exactly history, however. More than anything else it resembles one of those flea markets where we find the discarded and obsolete objects of an earlier era refurbished to serve newer and more up-to-date functions. Thus, just as old crocks are now turned into electric lamps and old bed quilts made to serve as modern abstract "pictures" to hang on the wall, so *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air* performs many similar acts of conversion on certain relics of 19th-century culture. Berman's prized crock, in this instance, is Karl Marx's *Communist Manifesto*, which in its new guise is offered to us as nothing less than "the first great modernist work of art."

It is from the *Manifesto* that Berman has drawn the title of this work—"All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned"—but Marx's historical pronunciamento is treated less as a political document than as a prose poem deemed to be "remarkable for its imaginative power, its expression and grasp of the luminous and dreadful possibilities that pervade modern life." It is not for its radical ideology that we are invited to savor this poetic achievement, but for its "radical tensions," and in keeping with this literary approach to the *Manifesto*, Berman manages to discover as many "tensions" in its text as any New Critic ever found in the poetry of John Donne. One sometimes wonders if this book should not really have been called *All That Is Solid Melts Into—ART*!

The book abounds in conversions of this sort. Goethe's *Faust* is dubbed a "Tragedy of Development," and its hero turns out to bear a distinct likeness to Robert Moses, the creator—*inter alia*—of Jones Beach and the Cross-Bronx Expressway. Which isn't as much of a comedown for Faust as it may seem, for Moses—Robert, that is—is placed by Berman in the company of a "long line of titanic builders and destroyers . . . Louis XIV, Peter the Great, Baron Haussmann, Joseph Stalin . . . Bugsy Siegel . . . 'Kingfish' Huey Long; Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Goethe's Faust, Captain Ahab, Mr. Kurtz, Citizen Kane." I doubt if even Robert Moses's outsize ego could have comfortably accommodated itself to this curious roster of "builders and destroyers," but for the reader, at least, the list serves as a nice example of Berman's gift for making fine discriminations.

Robert Moses, whether or not he can be said to belong in the company of Louis XIV or Bugsy Siegel or Alice in Wonderland, is important to the dramaturgy of Berman's fable of modernity. For it was the creation of the Cross-Bronx Expressway that allegedly brought about the ruin of our author's beloved old neighborhood, thus depriving him of the kind of "primal modern scenes," as he calls them—"everyday encounters in the city street that are raised to first intensity . . . , to the point where they express fundamental possibilities and pitfalls, allures and impasses of modern life"—that he so much envies in Baudelaire's Paris and Dostoevsky's St. Petersburg. My own impression is that New York City nowadays provides its residents with a great many more "primal modern scenes" on its streets than they have a taste for, but this, I suppose, is to descend to a vugar plane of reality—something that Marshall Berman can never be accused of doing.

THERE are whole sections of this book devoted to Paris and St. Petersburg—these, together with the final section on the Bronx, constitute the principal tableaux around which the book is constructed—but, like the treatment of the *Communist Manifesto*, they are so egregiously "literary," so little based on historical actualities, and so much given to substituting images and anecdotes for analysis, that they are virtually worthless as guides to their subjects. Berman seems to have discovered 19th-century Paris in the pages of Walter Benjamin, and as for St. Petersburg—well, suffice it to say that for our author 19th-century Russia is the "archetype of the emerging 20th-century Third World." Exactly how Dostoevsky and Gogol and the other literary eminences who dominate the discussion of St. Petersburg can be made to accord with this view is never made clear, but then the whole section on Russia is little more than a literary blur.

It is Berman's belief that in the 20th century "we don't know how to use our modernism"—even though, as he hastens to affirm, "The 20th century may well be the most brilliantly creative in the history of the world"—and that "we have missed or broken the connection between our culture and our lives." In this matter, at least, it is averred that they ordered these things much better in the 19th century when the relation of aesthetic modernism to social modernization is

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claimed to have been more creative, more dynamic, more dialectical, and more wonderful in every way. This, above all, is the reason why we should now be setting our sights backward—on Baudelaire's Paris and Dostoevsky's St. Petersburg. There, apparently, the connection between "our culture" and "our lives" would have had much more to offer us than the dismal present.

Missing from this discussion, astonishingly enough, is the notion of alienation, which, it may be recalled, emerged in the 19th century as a way of accounting for a phenomenon suspiciously akin to those "missed or broken" connections that Berman is eager to blame on Robert Moses or sundry other villains of our time. The word "alienation" does not even appear in the well-made index of this book. Which gives *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air* a certain distinction in the annals of radical literature. One quite understands why Berman would want to shy away from this notion. It would not have much to contribute to his tableaux of the glorious past to which we are being invited to return for a renewal of our dampened spirits. All the same, one rather misses it.

I am afraid that he is no more intelligent about the modernism of the present age. The roll call he offers as representing the "brilliance and depth of living modernism"—"Grass, Garcia Marquez, Fuentes, Cunningham, Nevelson, di Suvero, Kenso Tange, Fassbinder, Herzog, Sembene, Robert Wilson, Philip Glass, Richard Foreman, Twyla Tharp, Maxine Hong Kingston"—is, two or three names excepted, merely another roundup of the usual suspects, aesthetically chic and politically Left. It is, in any case, more revealing for the names it omits than for those it includes.

The real giveaway, however, comes in the fantasy that overtakes the final section of the book. There Berman presents us with what he calls "my Bronx modernist dream: The Bronx Mural":

> The Bronx Mural, as I imagine it, would be painted onto the brick and concrete retaining walls that run alongside most of the eight miles of the Cross-Bronx Expressway, so that every automobile trip through and out of the Bronx would become a trip into its buried depths. . . . The mural might depict cross-sections of streets, of houses, even of rooms full of people just as they were before the Expressway cut through them all.

In this mural would be depicted, more or less (one gathers) in the manner of the old "Ballad for Americans," a cast of thousands representing successive waves of immigration, radical sects, and prosperous Bronx alumni who have made their mark in American life. Never for a moment does Berman suspect that his "modernist dream"—which seems to have been compounded of 1930's-style post-office murals, Soviet-style Socialist Realism, and perhaps a bit of Southern California kitsch—represents everything that the modernist imaginative has long ago repudiated.

If we ever doubted that it is the destiny of the radical mind to ally itself, sooner or later, with philistine taste and populist values, then we have only to turn to Marshall Berman's dream for his "Bronx Mural." All the vulgarity and sentimentality and bad faith that it has long been the mission of authentic modernist culture to penetrate and expose are there writ large enough for all but the most obtuse—or the most committed—to see. *All That Is Solid Melts Into Air* is a very muddled book, but this point at least is made vividly clear.

One Man's Doctrine

THE MAKING OF MODERN ZIONISM: THE INTELLECTUAL ORIGINS OF THE JEWISH STATE. By SHLOMO AVINERI. *Basic Books. 244 pp. $15.50.*

Reviewed by DAVID VITAL

ONE of the central difficulties about Zionism is that there is no agreement about its content or nature or ultimate purposes. One man's Zionism need not be—indeed, rarely is—another's. Nor is

DAVID VITAL *is professor of political science at Tel Aviv University and the author of, most recently,* Zionism: The Formative Years *(Oxford).*

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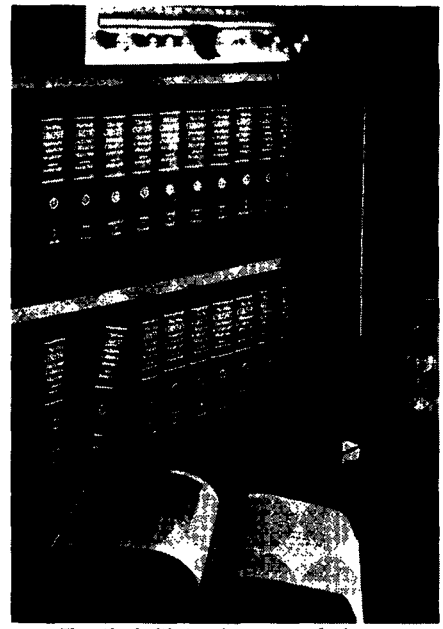

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there a body of doctrine, an authoritative, let alone sacred, text to which all can refer and in terms of which disagreement can be resolved. So it was at the beginning; so it has been in the course of the some hundred years of the movement's history; so it is today, when it is least clear where the movement might be going or whether, in any real and not merely institutional sense, it may be said to exist at all.

The twin effects of these uncertainties have been confusion within the movement and doubts, leading often to hostility, among those outside disposed originally to sympathize with it. Where political and other nonideological considerations enter into the equation, the transition from amity to enmity may be particularly harsh. Sir Ronald Storrs, traveling to Palestine over sixty years ago to take up his post as governor of Jerusalem, positively embarrassed the gruff Zionist leader Menahem Ussishkin with unsolicited declarations and promises of sympathy; the same Storrs, thirty years later, prefaced a lecture to Oxford undergraduates with the statement, "I have never been an anti-Semite; but I have always been an anti-Zionist." The infamous coupling of Zionism with racism at the UN in 1975 came only a generation after what had seemed the final admission of Israel into the comity of nations by the same organization. And here, side-by-side with the huge defamatory effort mounted by the enemies of Israel, could be seen the extraordinary hurt and embarrassment suffered by the supporters and sympathizers of Jewish political independence and of the purposes which lay at its foundation—of Zionism.

It is well worth asking, why extraordinary, why the hurt, why the embarrassment? Why should the thinly disguised anti-Semitic campaign not have been taken by Zionists and others in their stride? Ought not the campaign to have been seen simply as part of the admittedly difficult but worthwhile struggle to restructure relations between Jews and other peoples against heavy opposition: an unpleasant campaign, if only because of the lies to which it was giving vent, but ultimately to be shrugged off? Has it not in itself constituted the plainest evidence of the success of Zionism, and the despair of its enemies? Unable to destroy it (and Israel) by direct application of force, they have sought to undermine it by sapping its ideological and moral foundations. As such the campaign is a confession of weakness. Why, then, the failure of nerve?

A part of the explanation, I would argue, lies in the fact that the Zionists themselves have never quite come together except for comparatively precise and immediate ends at specific moments (as in the matter of the movement of DP's in Europe to Palestine immediately after World War II or in 1948). The history of the movement up to the establishment of the state in 1948—literally up to the last few days preceding the decision—is replete with profound disagreement about the purposes at which it should aim and the means by which those purposes should be attained and, upon attainment, consolidated. As late as the 1930's only a minority thought it worth saying that what was wanted even at the end of the road was political independence; it is arguable that a majority did not want independence at all—not, at all events, in any foreseeable, readily conceivable future. Disagreement on the related issues of religion, society, the economy, the system of government, and, of course, the Arabs was profound.

So the questions of what the Jews were really after in Palestine, and how representative they were of those they had left behind, and what should be the relationship between the community there and all other communities remained, in their essentials, open throughout. This lack of firm consensus has tended to leave Zionists peculiarly vulnerable to hostile criticism—not least because some of it some of the time has echoed the spoken and unspoken strictures of members of the family itself.

But that is not all. While this last set of questions is now, strictly speaking, one for the historians to take up, there is another which concerns Israel itself, today, and is very much alive: where should Israel go, now that it has been set up? Where is it, in fact, going? What is legitimate for it to seek? What is feasible? And what, broadly and ultimately, should a Jewish state, or a state inhabited chiefly by Jews, be like? Within Israel itself these are questions and issues which are ever more fiercely debated; and it is characteristic of much of the debate—and inevitable, probably, considering Israel's origins—that there should be constant attempts to relate and justify the various arguments in terms of what purports to be the basic, common ideology: Zionism.

But alas, just as there never was all that much agreement on the first set of questions, today's great, continuous public debate is rarely constructive and all too often shrill. And, further, a fair part of the contemporary discussion of pre-1948 Zionism, even in what purports to be the academic, historical mode, turns out on inspection to be hugely influenced by, if not positively directed to, the contemporary political debate. Historical analysis and contemporary politics are exceedingly difficult to keep apart in Israel—more, perhaps, than some might realize. Of all these currents and cross-currents the book under review is a fair example.

SHLOMO AVINERI's new book started life as a series of lectures to undergraduates, and in its original Hebrew edition was plainly titled *The Varieties of Zionism*. That it should have been given a rather pretentious and moderately misleading fresh title in its English version is to be regretted. It is not about the "making" of Zionism, except by distant implication. It is not clear what "modern" Zionism might be: was there an ancient Zionism? And whether the book really tackles the "intellectual origins of the Jewish *state*," i.e., Israel as a going political institutional concern, is debatable to say the least.

These, however, are trivial if irritating features. For it is the undoubted virtue of this book that it does make abundantly clear the variety of approaches to Jewish is-

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sues and to the "Jewish Problem" contained under the portmanteau term "Zionism." Not all the key ideologists and formulators of doctrine are present, and some who are might have been dispensed with as not really of the family. (Where is Israel Zangwill? And what is the historian Heinrich Graetz doing in this company?) But it is notorious that no selection of this kind can please everyone; and by and large the chief figures are present and accounted for: Hess, Lilienblum, Pinsker, Herzl, Nordau, Ahad Ha'Am, Syrkin, Borochov, Jabotinsky, Kook, Ben-Gurion, and a few others. In the parlor game of "my favorite Zionists" (as well as "Zionists I love to hate," of which more later) Avineri has done well enough. On that score, at least, to criticize is to cavil.

The author's introduction and epilogue together present the now well-established and certainly well-founded thesis that Zionism is, in an important sense, a revolutionary movement—at all events, so far as the Jews have been concerned. This is much the best part of the book. It is done in effective and cogent terms and Avineri's argument is coupled with an interesting and original concomitant, the nub of which is that Israel has become a "focus of identity" for virtually all Jews, within the state and outside it. By a twist of fate and the historical process, the concept originally associated with the theorist Ahad Ha'Am—that the Jewish community and polity in Palestine should serve as a sort of moral beacon for all Jewry (a "normative center," in Avineri's terminology) —has taken on real flesh and bones after all.

It is, accordingly, the quality and nature of Israeli society that matter most, even if the moral burden and social responsibilities that Israelis must therefore undertake are unusual and severe. The Jewish state, Avineri argues, must keep its distance from the common norms and ethos of the Diaspora if it is ultimately to serve it. And an important corollary follows: the "ethos of social responsibility necessary for nation-building in Israel" requires a thorough shying-away from laissez-faire, "Friedmanite" economics. In brief, Israel must be socialist if it is to fulfill its destiny and keep stoked the fires of "Zionism as a permanent revolution" in Jewish life.

THUS, underlying the author's tour of the gallery of Zionist worthies there is a serious, if never fully fleshed-out, contemporary political thesis: namely, that the true and proper Zionists were always those with a clear social and cultural bias and that the socialists (social democrats) among them were the Zionists *par excellence*. It would follow that, by straying from the path laid down most notably by the Labor party in its original shape and form, Israel has done itself and other Jewries a disservice. The present regime, Beginite/Likud/post-Revisionist, and the climate of political and social opinion that has allowed it to occupy the commanding heights of government (government, one might stress, not necessarily society or the economy), is disastrous and wrong. Wrong, that is to say, in terms of Zionism in its fundamental, pristine, true form.

The spirit in which the book is written and its contents put together is thus, implicitly, Manichean. And the villain of the piece, inevitably, is Vladimir Jabotinsky—as a disciple of whom Menahem Begin is fond of presenting himself. Indeed, Avineri devotes an inordinate amount of space to Jabotinsky: half as much again as to Ben-Gurion and two to three times as much as to any of the others. Fascination? One way or another, what emerges is—not to put too fine a point on it—a hatchet job. Jabotinsky is presented as a nationalist in the least pleasant (to modern, Western, liberal ears) sense of the term, as a man intoxicated by might and prowess and the symbols and postures appropriate to them, as one having an affinity, if not more, with the rulers in his day of Italy and Poland and, while it lasted, the Ukrainian republic, as a militarist, a rightist, and, well, virtually a racist and a fascist into the bargain.

Now, it is not too difficult to show *both* that there are aspects of Jabotinsky which are exceedingly

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—William Gavin (in *Human Events*)

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unattractive to reasonable, middle-of-the-road democrats *and* that a good deal of what Avineri brings up is wrenched out of historical context and set out with little consideration for Jabotinsky's own history and development.

Jabotinsky was a complex figure. He was in many ways a remarkably gifted, but also remarkably superficial man. A man of words as much as a man of action, but never in any important sense a thinker, one whose ideas and writings form a reasonably consistent, seriously thought-out account or analysis of the great questions which obsessed him. (This may be said of many of his opponents as well.) He had been a sort of boy-wonder of Russian Zionism. He was uncommonly brave and self-denying. He was utterly well-meaning, so far as his people, the Jewish people of Eastern Europe, were concerned. And in all his doings, certainly in the last twenty years or so of his life, he was informed by a sense of impending catastrophe. But he tended to move rapidly from idea to idea. He was attracted to the bright, the spectacular, and the glorious as a moth to the flame. He was (and in this Avineri is correct) no democrat.

Jabotinsky was terribly impatient—for his people, for his movement, and for himself. He simply did not have the stamina to go about his political and public business with the care and caution and inevitably slow pace that were characteristic of Weizmann and Ben-Gurion. So in the end they may be judged statesmen—unattractive in some ways, but of solid political achievement—while Jabotinsky, by contrast, was a comet in the dark sky of interwar Jewry: bright, attractive, but ephemeral. The pity is that too many of his "disciples" were—and remain—excessively fascinated by his stellar characteristics without stopping to consider his great weaknesses, let alone his ultimate political fate and legacy.

As a tract against Begin and his minions, Avineri's essay on Jabotinsky is splendid. As a piece of historical analysis it is disappointing and rather cruel.

WHAT then of Zionism? Can its various and varied proponents be lined up after all into classes of ideological cowboys and Indians? Can the matter of Zionism be boiled down to a clear, internally consistent doctrine? It does not seem so. At all events, the case for doing so has not been made out. Is this because even the celebrated early tracts of Pinsker (*Autoemancipation*) and Herzl (*The Jewish State*) are simply not in the same intellectual class as, say, the *Communist Manifesto* or the writings of Edmund Burke? Or because, for all their immense importance at the time of their composition, they have been of little guidance or relevance to subsequent generations? Why does all the talk, some emanating from Jerusalem, some from New York and other places, about a *new* Zionism, ring hollow? Why does nothing of lasting value emerge?

Part of the answer seems to be that Zionism is not really like socialism or political liberalism at all, or any other doctrine or set of doctrinal positions directed at the cure or correction of some basic but universal social flaw. It is both a great deal more comprehensive and yet much narrower. Its aim, insofar as it may be said to have an aim, has been the remaking of Jewry, inducing change—virtually change for its own sake. For Zionism represents, and is the consequence of, a malaise, a profound sense of dissatisfaction with an existing situation. But that situation, the condition of modern Jewry, is itself enormously complex and varied, and the degree of dissatisfaction with it has varied very greatly, from time to time, from place to place, and from person to person.

Thus no common denominator could ever possibly have evolved. Zionism has remained, at bottom, a feeling, a sentiment, an urge, an expression of impatience, rather than a doctrine in the ordinary way. In that sense, Jabotinsky for all his faults was as much a member of the family—the extended family!—as anyone else. The way to examine the movement in its better years is therefore in terms of its own times and places, not our own. As for contemporary Zionists in Israel and elsewhere, they would do better to fight their battles with direct reference to the world they actually inhabit.

Thinking About the Past

PRACTICING HISTORY: SELECTED ESSAYS. By BARBARA W. TUCHMAN. *Knopf. 306 pp. $16.50.*

Reviewed by JACK N. RAKOVE

THE publication of this book testifies, in its own curious way, to the strength of Barbara Tuchman's extraordinary popularity and reputation. For it is not immediately apparent why this book needed to be published; nor is it clear what sense the reader is to make of the essays, addresses, and stray reviews here assembled. *Practicing History* is a true miscellany, its selections admirably wide-ranging but also uneven both in quality and interest.

This is not to deny that many of the pieces illustrate the talents that have served Mrs. Tuchman so well in the writing of history. Some sparkle with her gift for finding what she calls "the corroborative detail" that makes a narrative "vivid and memorable." An account of Franklin D. Roosevelt's reelection campaign of 1936, written when Mrs. Tuchman was three years out of Radcliffe, contrasts the impromptu crowds which gathered to welcome the President on a swing through Manhattan with the persisting quiet that greeted the motorcade after it turned onto Park Avenue. "There the sidewalks were no more crowded than usual, and the only heads peering out the windows were the servants.'" Elsewhere, in an essay asking what might have happened "If Mao Had Come to Washington" in 1945, Mrs. Tuchman deftly explains why Mao's offer to meet with Roosevelt came to nothing, concludes that "there never was an 'if'" that could have altered the course events ultimately took, yet vividly recreates the realm of possibility within which narrower choices were made. And in the finest essay in this vol-

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ume, she describes "The Assimilationist Dilemma" of her maternal grandfather, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., who as ambassador to Turkey during World War I held the "Jewish seat" in the American diplomatic corps, and who thus found himself strategically well-positioned to assist the struggling *yishuv* in Palestine at a critical moment in its history.*

Mrs. Tuchman allows herself a brief personal appearance in this last essay, recalling the "acute embarrassment" she felt watching her grandfather "consorting with the snobs" at his summer home in Bar Harbor; for assimilation, to Morgenthau, meant the right "to be accepted in Bar Harbor *as* a Jew." But Mrs. Tuchman reveals less about herself than a book like this should have encouraged her to do. Except when she is offering her ideas about writing, we are left to draw inferences about our author from a handful of essays on contemporary subjects. Two celebratory articles on Israel, written a few months on either side of the 1967 war, demonstrate that her grandfather's ambivalence about Zionism was not hereditary—though to read these pieces now, when such upbeat tributes to the "Land of Unlimited Possibilities" are themselves artifacts of the past, has a curiously depressing effect. Several op-edish articles on Vietnam and Watergate present Mrs. Tuchman arguing vigorously for early American withdrawal and the impeachment of Richard Nixon.

If these overtly political pieces now read like familiar tracts from their times, two addresses she delivered in the spring of 1972 portray this seemingly conventional liberal in a different and more striking light. Lecturing before the Army War College on the subject of "Generalship," she raises some tough questions about the lessons her audience ought to draw from Vietnam, not least of which is the need to consider how to exercise effective military leadership while waging a limited and controversial war. Two months later, delivering the commencement address at Williams College, she reminds the graduates that the obligation "to serve under arms . . . is not only a right but a criterion of citizenship."

IF THE remaining essays in *Practicing History* were as forceful or engaging, the book would be worth the price of admission. But too many others fall flat, as is the case, for example, with a silly piece on "Mankind's Better Moments": the reclamation of the Zuider Zee, Gothic cathedrals, La Salle's search for the mouth of the Mississippi, and other high points. More surprising, the most disappointing essays turn out to be those in which Mrs. Tuchman reflects on "The Craft" of history, by which she usually means the writing of her major books. One problem with *Practicing History* is that Mrs. Tuchman's thoughts about the writing of history are far less interesting than the history she has written. But the real trouble cuts deeper. Her reflections on the past—and how we come to know it—seem so superficial, even naive, that one can easily come away from this book convinced that her ideas about history are no more profound today than when she left Radcliffe.

Much of what she has to say about the writing of history can be lumped under the heading of sensible but self-evident advice. She is right, of course, to remind us that all the research in the world is wasted if it is not translated into something that can be read. Her suggestions for constructing narrative seem similarly correct—and no less obvious. The use of "the corroborative detail," the selection of biographical subjects who can serve as a "prism" for viewing larger developments, the importance of excising vignettes that, however colorful, really do not belong—all this is useful in a way, but no great literary secrets are disclosed.

The other sides of these coins go unexamined. What great truth is corroborated by learning that the six-foot-six Grand Duke Nicholas needed to have his aide pin a piece of paper over the door to his railroad-car headquarters to remind him to duck his head? What risks

* This essay was first published in COMMENTARY, May 1977.

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of oversimplification do we run by trying to reduce something as complex as "the American experience in China" to the career of one general? Nor will the long-distance reader who crosses the finish line of *Stilwell* or *A Distant Mirror*—two sprawling, underedited books—be convinced that their author has obeyed strict rules of literary economy.

An academic historian might take Mrs. Tuchman's advice more gracefully if she confined its application to the act of writing alone. But Mrs. Tuchman is convinced that the techniques of narrative can offer something more, that they provide, in fact, "the key to the problem of causation." If one only arranges events "in sequence as strictly as possible," she asserts, "cause and effect which may have been previously obscure will come clear." And again, she tells us, "If the historian will submit himself *to* his material instead of trying to impose himself *on* his material, then the material will ultimately speak to him and supply the answers."

The proposition is half-true. The historian who fails to respect chronology will certainly bungle the job of explanation. And indeed there are certain kinds of events for which narrative can, by itself, become explanatory. One thinks particularly of the history of war (or at least the histories of battles), and thus as well of the power of Barbara Tuchman's best book, *The Guns of August*. If we could only confine our interest in the past to similarly dramatic and chronologically defined episodes, the traditional techniques of narration could serve academic historians as well as Mrs. Tuchman believes they have worked for her.

But the range of problems that her prescription can effectively treat is quite limited. For far from being the obvious, overlooked solution to the historians' woes, narrative has itself become one of our principal problems—but not for the reasons Mrs. Tuchman alleges. The problem is not that historians are oblivious to exposition; the opposite is in fact the case. It is rather that the kinds of questions we now ask about the past defy ready conversion, when answered, into the narrative forms Mrs. Tuchman has mastered.

The well-tested devices we can invoke to describe the course of battle, or the conduct of diplomacy, or the lives and works of colorful, articulate individuals, simply break down when our attention shifts to many of the less tractable subjects that preoccupy us today. One can use traditional narrative to describe how the slaves emancipated by the Union army in 1865 responded to their freedom, as Leon Litwack did to great effect in *Been in the Storm So Long*, but not to explain why their ancestors, alone among the slave populations of the Americas, succeeded in reproducing themselves naturally rather than by immigration. Yet this latter development, which can only be detected and explained through the tedious apparatus of demography, is far more essential to understanding the dynamics of black history than the immediate drama of emancipation.

Equally tenuous is Mrs. Tuchman's claim that the meaning of the material will somehow reveal itself to the patient historian who has carefully arranged everything in place. Of course any historian who literally imposes himself on the evidence will crush it with the weight of his preconceptions. But it is the rare piece of evidence that speaks spontaneously and unequivocally. In most of our encounters with the past, meaning arises only after we have asked questions of our evidence and resolved its ambiguities.

At a deeper level, the meanings we ascribe to the past inevitably draw upon and reflect contemporary concerns. Mrs. Tuchman criticizes the idea that "History is properly the interpretation of past events in terms of their consequences, and in the light shed upon them by present knowledge and present values." Instead, she argues, "To understand the choices open to people of another time, one must limit oneself to what they knew." Again, she is half-right. Of course it is wrong to endow the actors of the past with a degree of understanding they could not have had. But is not knowledge of how the story turned out essential to the way in which we formulate problems and ask questions? And of what use is it to deny ourselves information that was not available to the historical actors themselves? Does it detract from a narrative to explain why, for example, the wasted populations of 14th-century Europe could not have understood the causes of the Black Death?

But one doubts that Mrs. Tuchman actually works in the way she describes. It was not the historical record alone that prompted her to see the 14th century as a mirror for our own times; the comparison is, after all, more than a little strained. Nor, surely, did she undertake her biography of Stilwell without having some inkling that the story she hoped to tell would also explain the confusion of our China policy after 1945 and, if only by implication, our later failure in Vietnam as well. No one reading—or preparing—that book a decade ago could ignore the implicit analogy between Stilwell's inability to make Chiang Kai-shek fight the Japanese and our own frustrations with Diem and Thieu; nor could anyone reading a concluding paragraph emphasizing the limits of American influence in China fail to perceive the application of a similar moral to Vietnam.

When she is actually writing history, Mrs. Tuchman involves herself too closely with her subjects to let their stories be corrupted by crude moralizing. *A Distant Mirror* really is a book about the 14th century, not a tract written for the Club of Rome in a burst of Malthusian zeal. But the intellectual naiveté and inconsistency that make *Practicing History* so disappointing a book also confirm the doubts that many historians have expressed about her work over the years. However successful a storyteller Barbara Tuchman has become, the stories she has told have added little to our knowledge of the past; perhaps that has never been her concern. It is the unfortunate and certainly unintended consequence of her latest work that it explains why her ideas about history should not be taken seriously.

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Hobnobbing with Knickerbockers

THE KING OF FIFTH AVENUE: THE FORTUNES OF AUGUST BELMONT. By DAVID BLACK. *Dial. 804 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by JONATHAN D. SARNA

AUGUST BELMONT, twenty-three years old, arrived in New York City on May 14, 1837. As David Black explains in his massive and riveting new biography, the handsome youth had already been an employee of the House of Rothschild for almost nine years. He first served an apprenticeship as errand boy, sweeper, and polisher, and then, thanks to his quick mind and rapid facility with languages, he moved swiftly up through the ranks. Entrusted with missions to Paris and Rome, he was now charged with investigating the effects of Spain's Carlist war on the economy of Cuba and on his employers' investments in the New World. This was to be his first visit across the Atlantic—a quick one. It did not turn out as planned.

Belmont found New York in economic turmoil, with banks failing, businesses shut, and the Rothschilds' own agent in the city, J.L. and S.I. Joseph & Co., bankrupt. The situation, though seemingly bleak, offered a not-to-be-missed opportunity, and Belmont, amply provisioned with courage and *chutzpa*, seized it. He set himself up as the replacement to Joseph & Co., gambling that the Rothschilds would support him despite his youth. They did. As business recovered, Belmont became a rich man, for not only did he look after the Rothschilds' interests in America, he also invested on his own.

By 1840 Belmont had accumulated a personal fortune estimated at $100,000 and was considered one of the three most important bankers in the United States. While the precise details of his meteoric rise may never be known—most financial records of the company burned or vanished—his success stemmed, broadly speaking, from three factors: Belmont's own skill at arbitrage, the Rothschilds' support and credit, and New York's transformation from a large seaport town into one of the great cities of the modern world.* August Belmont and Company stood as a conspicuous element "in a cosmos of talents and skills which had concentrated in New York . . . form[ing] the great system of knowledge required to manage the exchange of goods in both the national and international economies." The financier exemplified the American success story: he was the right man, in the right place, at the right time—and he made the most of his opportunity.

To the economic historian, August Belmont represents a textbook example of venture capitalism. By making money and credit available, fostering international trade, and investing in new markets, Belmont helped enable American industry to take off and expand at an ever increasing rate. More conservative than some, as ruthless as any, and until late in the century more prosperous than almost all, Belmont invested in everything from cotton, real estate, and railroads to local, state, and federal government securities. In his opinion—it was not an opinion shared in Europe—United States securities were "the safest in the world," and he tried to convince the Rothschilds to purchase more of them. During the Civil War, and notwithstanding his Democratic-party affiliation and trade ties with the South, Belmont both openly and covertly worked for the Union cause and floated Union bonds ("not," he said, "as the Banker & Correspondent of foreign banking firms but as an American citizen, anxious to do his share in the crisis which has overcome our dear Country").

Muckrakers and Progressive historians later considered Belmont a

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* A recent book by Edward K. Spann, *The New Metropolis: New York City 1840–1857* (Columbia University Press, 546 pp., $19.95), describes this transformation in detail.

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disgraceful "robber baron," and Matthew Josephson coupled him with such "swine, jackals, and wolves" as the Dixes, Astors, Morgans, and Goldschmidts. But while he was no paragon of virtue, Belmont—and this holds true for most other "robber barons" as well—was a man of personal integrity. His business depended upon it; his customers and country benefited from it.

Politically, August Belmont supported the Democrats. At first he only voted for them, later he worked for them, and still later, from 1860 to 1872, he chaired their national committee. Irving Katz, in *August Belmont: A Political Biography* (1968), has shown that he, more than any other single person, insured the survival of the Democratic party after the death of Stephen A. Douglas, when it entered its "most disastrous epoch": the divisive Civil War years and the spell of ugly anti-Democratic recriminations which followed them. Belmont had money, energy, and organizing ability; he commanded loyalty and he was loyal; he never faltered in his support for the Union indivisible. Though during his tenure as chairman his party never won the Presidency, when it did win, with Grover Cleveland in 1884, he was awarded some of the credit. "The success," Maryland Senator Arthur P. Gorman wrote him, "would not have been possible but for the foundation laid by you."

WHILE Belmont's politics found its historian in Irving Katz, until David Black's new work far less has been known about the other August Belmont, the family man and society mogul. During his lifetime, Belmont was credited with having "taught New Yorkers how to eat, how to drink, how to dress, how to drive four-in-hands, how to furnish their houses, [and] how to live generally according to the rules of the possibly somewhat effete but unquestionably refined society of the Old World." The claim, though somewhat exaggerated—John Jacob Astor and those whom Nathaniel P. Willis dubbed the "Upper Ten" also taught New Yorkers a thing or two—is perhaps not that far off the mark.

The "King of Fifth Avenue," as Black calls him, was conspicuous consumption personified, a condition heightened by his marriage to Caroline Slidell Perry, daughter of Commodore Matthew C. Perry (Belmont was thirty-six, Caroline nineteen; he was Jewish, she Episcopalian). Parties, possessions, progeny, and horseracing, along with omnipresent threats of scandal, seem to have occupied a large fraction of the couple's time. Black relates that at one memorable soirée, Belmont

> presided over a table that seated two hundred and was set with gold service. Each guest was attended by his or her own footman, who was dressed in maroon and scarlet Belmont livery and who soundlessly presented dishes and cleared away the empty plates as skillfully as a magician palming large gold coins.

Small wonder that the Belmont children, growing up, sought leisure over learning, never had enough money, played far harder than they worked, and often fell into trouble. This theme is a familiar one. The names and anecdotes change, the message remains ever the same.

WHAT does distinguish Belmont, and what lends his biography special significance, is the matter of religion. New York society knew other wealthy Jews in the pre-Civil War period; no fewer than seven were listed in Moses Beach's 1845 directory of the city's wealthiest men. But most of these Jews, like most members of the German-Jewish elite ("Our Crowd"), affiliated with the Jewish community and belonged to one or another synagogue, whether they attended it or not. Belmont, claiming that his "co-religionists in this country [were] too disagreeable," did not follow this route. For reasons that may only be speculated upon, he completely avoided the Jewish community. Black suggests that the established Jewish families may upon his arrival have avoided *him*, as an immigrant upstart. More likely, Belmont found it embarrassing to be in the company of S.I. Joseph, who remained a prominent member of the Jewish community long after Belmont replaced him as the Rothschilds' agent.

Whatever the case, Belmont clearly preferred hobnobbing with Knickerbockers, who held the prestige and power that he craved, to the company of Jews. So he kept his Judaism quiet and quickly succeeded in establishing himself in Christian society. His intermarriage presumably came as no surprise, and neither did the baptism of his children.

But though a closet Jew with a Christian family, Belmont neither denied his Judaism nor became an apostate. He claimed that "liberal views" permitted him to marry out; still, he wrote his sister, "I should not have liked to become a renegade." In America he could achieve social prominence without becoming a Christian; the Protestant elite admitted him regardless.

Yet in striving for two worlds, Belmont frequently found himself in neither. Opponents reminded him that, marriage notwithstanding, he remained a Jew. To reinforce this lesson, they tended to add "Jew" to his name whenever they felt he did something wrong. Ex-President James Buchanan once angrily referred to him as "a speculating German Jew," while national newspapers during the Civil War regularly called him "the Jew-broker" and questioned his patriotism.

For their part, Jews, though they sometimes defended him from attack, generally did not seek too close an association with one so distant from his people. One Jewish newspaper went so far as to break with him entirely: "Though a Jew by birth . . . [Belmont] married out of the faith many years ago, is not connected with a Jewish congregation, and is universally repudiated as a Jew." Of course, when he had done something noble even those who had disowned him were quick to claim him back. Still, the overall relationship between Belmont and the Jewish community remained ambivalent at best.

The ambivalence is understandable. On the one hand, Belmont represented the American dream: proof that anyone, even a Jew, could rise to unimaginable heights

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through intelligence and hard work. On the other hand, he represented the Jewish nightmare: secularism, assimilation, intermarriage, loss of identity—in sum, America's challenge to Jewish survival.

AMERICAN Jewish history is strewn with Belmont-type figures. Except for converts (and there have been plenty of those), they represent the most extreme form of Jewish accommodation to the American scene. On a spectrum stretching from total assimilation to uncompromising traditionalism they lie but inches away from the leftmost point.

Judah Benjamin—brilliant lawyer, Senator from Louisiana, and a leader of the Confederacy—stands out as a prominent example of this category. A contemporary of Belmont's, he too intermarried and maintained no formal ties to the Jewish community. He too was reminded of his Judaism by others, Jews and Gentiles alike. He too refused to convert, but permitted his children to be raised in their mother's faith.

Bernard Baruch, Walter Lippmann, and innumerable others, well known and unknown, follow in this same tradition. While they may espouse different views concerning the value of Judaism, or display different levels of self-hatred, all insist that *their* Jewishness means little—certainly not enough to pass on to their children. To be an American in their eyes is enough. The survival of Judaism is not their concern.

There remains a certain significance in the fact that Belmont-type Jews nevertheless do not convert. Historically, many European countries demanded baptism as "the entrance ticket to European culture" —in the phrase of Heinrich Heine, who himself became such an apostate. America made no such demands. While Jews never had as easy a time as Protestants, they could scale the heights of society without belonging to a church. In remaining Jews, such assimilationists—even when they have evinced no interest in the continued existence of Jews or Judaism—have upheld this important principle. One need not applaud them morally or religiously to acknowledge that this fact speaks volumes about America's religious tradition.

The Present Danger

LE SPECTATEUR ENGAGÉ. By RAYMOND ARON. *Julliard. 339 pp. 73 francs.*

DEVANT LA GUERRE. By CORNELIUS CASTORIADIS. *Fayard. 285 pp. 70 francs.*

Reviewed by SCOTT MCCONNELL

THE considerable impact that these two quite different books have made in France is a testament to substantial changes that have occurred in the French intellectual climate over the past several years. The degradation of the Soviet Union's image in France is the most striking aspect of a more profound evolution. Major intellec-

SCOTT MCCONNELL, *a new contributor, is a doctoral candidate in European history at Columbia University who is currently doing research in France.*

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tuals long associated with the French Left now speak of the Marxist revolutionary project with a new skepticism. There is a new consciousness, and dread, of totalitarianism. Above all, there is a much wider expression of the idea that the antagonism between totalitarianism and liberty is fundamental for our time, far transcending in importance the traditional enmity between what the French were the first to label the Right and the Left.

Those familiar with the extraordinarily perceptive and prolific writings of Raymond Aron will recognize in this outbreak of common sense a rapprochement with ideas that Aron has stressed for more than thirty years. Yet the conclusions of this most lucid of French political writers have rarely found wide acceptance in France. Aron, to be sure, has always had his admirers. He was an occasional counselor of de Gaulle, and he has long had a following among France's technocratic and administrative elite. His political journalism in the daily *Figaro* and the weekly *l'Express* has always reached important readers, and his scholarly work in sociology, philosophy, and international relations has earned him renown on both sides of the Atlantic. But the rather advanced permeation of postwar French intellectual life with the mystique of Marxism limited his influence in the intellectual classes. A large number of French teachers and their students simply considered Aron a man of the Right, which was sufficient excuse to reject or ignore his arguments.

The enthusiasm which has greeted Aron's recently published memoir, *Le Spectateur Engagé* ("The Engaged Onlooker"), seems confirmation that this climate has changed. The new book, which has remained near the top of the French best-seller lists for nearly four months, is the edited transcript of conversations about his life and work that Aron held with two young French academics, Jean-Louis Missika and Dominique Wolton; a videotape of the talks was shown last year on French television.

The interview format works surprisingly well. Aron's two questioners turn the conversations into a playfully combative confrontation between generations. They belong to the body of former university students for whom the student-worker events of May 1968 were the seminal political experience. Like many of their contemporaries, they looked for political insight in the existential Marxism of Jean-Paul Sartre; the clear and icy realism of Aron represented a remote and antithetical pole. If, in the years since 1968, they have discovered that Aron had been more prescient than most French intellectuals about Nazism, about Stalinism, and about the futility of France's last-ditch colonial effort in Algeria, they have not completely abandoned the style characteristic of their earlier allegiances. Their admiration for Aron, granted so reluctantly, seems all the more profound as a result. Their collaboration with him has produced a memoir that is both an incisive commentary on the political history of the past fifty years and a warm portrait of an intellectual still passionately engaged in political analysis and struggle.

The early chapters, in which Aron recalls his experiences in the 1930's, when he was a young philosophy teacher working on his doctoral thesis (and two additional books), provide the most revealing clues to the formation of his sensibility. Among Aron's friends were the most vital young and not-so-young minds of France. He had been close to Sartre since their days as classmates at the Ecole Normale Supérieure, he knew Paul Nizan and André Malraux, and the brilliant young philosophers in Alexandre Kojève's circle.

This milieu was resolutely anti-fascist; its members loathed Hitler; many were pro-Soviet. Yet they shared with the less gifted leaders of France an extraordinary political blindness, a remarkable incapacity to perceive what was needed to face up to the Nazi challenge. Few among them believed war was likely. None gave the faintest encouragement to a French military policy that would have stayed the drift toward war. Their every effort at rational appraisal of the diplomatic situation was undermined by wishful thinking, or by the lofty evocation of humanist principles. In 1936 the French government loudly proclaimed the remilitarization of the Rhineland by Germany unacceptable, before accepting it, and the anti-fascist intellectuals concurred. Two years later, after Munich, they were no more lucid.

Aron had the advantage over them of knowing Germany better. He had been a teacher in Berlin during Hitler's rise to power, and recognized from the outset that the Nazis would eventually present France with a military challenge. France, rent by ideological division, was incapable of action. Its intellectuals, who masked their uncertainties with ideological fervor, contributed in their small ways to the eventual debacle. In *Le Spectateur Engagé*, Aron presents the 1930's as an excellent illustration of a time when the course of history could have been changed profoundly by decisive human action. It was also during this period that Aron, reacting against the political illiteracy of the wonderfully clever people he knew, defined his own stance by forging the qualities of intellectual realism and clarity that have since become the distinguishing feature of his writing.

In 1940 the memoir jumps to London, where Aron joined the Gaullist movement and established with the general a relationship of mutual suspicion and respect that would last for thirty years. His tie with Sartre was less enduring; the political pressures of the cold war broke apart their friendship in the late 1940's. Sartre and the fellow-traveling Marxists around him became the target, several years later, of Aron's famous and profound polemic, *The Opium of the Intellectuals*. *Le Spectateur Engagé* lingers on these subjects, before moving to a discussion of Aron's efforts to dissuade the French from their foredoomed efforts to hold onto Algeria and an analysis of the social explosion of 1968. The memoir comes to a close with a rich examination of Europe's contemporary political dilemmas.

A RECENT work of Aron on the prospects of Europe has the uneasy

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title, *In Defense of Decadent Europe*. In *Le Spectateur Engagé* he evokes some of the arguments raised in that book. He points out that in the last generation Western Europe has made dazzling progress. Its living standards have risen dramatically, its politics have been tolerant and liberal, its people creative. If the verdicts of history were rendered by a court predisposed to the virtuous, Europeans would have little to fear. But, he argues, the future will almost certainly take into account the resolution and cohesion of societies, and here Europe's prospects are less certain. Europe has surmounted its internal but not its external challenges. Today it is threatened no longer by totalitarian ideologies but by the power of the Red Army.

The Soviet forces poised at Western Europe's doorstep, built up beyond any conceivable defense requirements, are, Aron maintains, intended primarily to intimidate the Europeans, and to a great extent they have succeeded. Europeans understandably want to escape from a history whose major passages have been written in blood; they yearn for a safe balcony seat from which to observe the struggle between liberty and totalitarianism. But this timidity is not without its own risks. It has led Europeans to place a great many bets simultaneously. Europe now gambles, at once, on the military protection of an America whose relative capacities have declined along with its political self-confidence, on sufficient stability in the Middle East to keep the oil flowing without interruption, and on the prudence of a Soviet Union whose military preponderance has grown increasingly evident. Aron declines to predict the chances for liberty's survival in Europe, but the contours of his analysis do not point to an enormous optimism.

SOME of the implications of the build-up of Soviet military power are the central subjects of *Devant la Guerre* ("Before the War"), an important book by the left-wing economist and political theorist, Cornelius Castoriadis. His work has emerged as a major point of reference in the French debate on Soviet capacities and intentions. Significantly, it is one of the first leftist analyses of the Soviet Union to leap beyond the tame and by now banal assertion that the Soviet variant of socialism has led to unfortunate results and should not be considered an example for revolutionary transformation in the nations of the West. Castoriadis emphatically argues that the Soviet state is not only a denial of socialism but an aggressive power, the primary threat to the societies and workers' movements of Western Europe.

Castoriadis has never been one of the Soviet Union's admirers. A Trotskyite at the time of his emigration from Greece to France at the end of World War II, he soon found too equivocal the Fourth International's interpretation of the USSR as a degenerated workers' state. In 1949 he founded a small sectarian review, *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, and launched attacks on Stalinism, Trotskyism, and capitalism with indiscriminate vehemence. Along the way he developed theories about workers' self-management and debureaucratized socialism which gained him a following among a younger generation of non-Communist leftist activists who were to play a role in the French strikes of 1968.

The events of May 1968 catapulted Castoriadis from obscurity; his earlier articles from the 1950's and 1960's have since been collected and published in some dozen volumes, and he has become widely known in France as an independent theorist of revolutionary socialism. Recognition, however, has not mellowed his uncommonly aggressive and argumentative style, and it is perhaps fortunate that Castoriadis has settled on a subject for which this style is superbly suited.

Devant la Guerre is a provocative effort to explain the seemingly contradictory aspects of the Soviet economy—contradictions which are the source of much Western confusion about the nature and the tendencies of the Soviet state. Essentially, Castoriadis asks how the Soviets manage to produce sophisticated military hardware in enormous quantities while every other sector of their economy stagnates from bottlenecks, low productivity, and lack of innovation. His responses to this question lead him to some interesting speculations on the nature of the contemporary Soviet system.

The book begins with a discussion of what this economy produces successfully: weapons, both nuclear and conventional, in such quantities as to give the Soviet armed forces a marked advantage over those of the United States. The imbalance of forces, while global in scope, is most evident in Central Europe, where the Soviets retain a decisive preponderance over the combined NATO forces in tanks, soldiers, and short- and medium-range nuclear weapons. Information about the deterioration of the military balance in Europe has only recently begun to seep from the specialist journals to the general European press. Castoriadis presents the dismal dossier with a rigor and clarity to which general European readers on the subject can hardly be accustomed. Then, utilizing specialized Western sources in the public domain, he demonstrates that Soviet weapons no longer suffer from the relative technological inferiority still commonly imputed to them.

It is primarily this last revelation —that a MIG-25 can outperform the leading American fighter planes —that leads Castoriadis to the core of his analysis of the Soviet political economy. For the production of high-performance aircraft, or other technologically advanced weapons, implies the existence of a network of factories which utilize techniques just as advanced as those in the West. To explain how the Soviet military-industrial sector operates efficiently while the civilian economy does not, Castoriadis argues that there must not be one Soviet economy but two—one civilian and one military. Not only, he infers, does the military sector have priority in the access to all raw materials, but it skims off as well the nation's most talented engineers, its most effective managers, and its most motivated workers. Production in this huge sector—Castoriadis estimates that it engages 20 percent of the Soviet labor force—must, he deduces, be char-

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acterized by quality controls, performance norms, and rhythms of work which differ dramatically from those in the civilian economy.

The dual-economy hypothesis leads Castoriadis to some rather dramatic conclusions about the nature of the Soviet leadership. Not only is Marxist-Leninist ideology completely moribund, but the party no longer rules; its place has been taken by the army and the technical specialists under the army's control. Since the fall of Khrushchev, this group, which Castoriadis calls a "stratocracy" (from the Greek *stratos*: army), has assumed control of the real levers of power. So long as its own priorities remain unchallenged, this power elite is content to "subcontract" to the Communist party the direction of the inefficient morass of Russian civil society. Incarnating the Russian nationalism which is the only legitimating ideology still viable in the Soviet Union, the "stratocracy" controls the society's only modern and dynamic sector. Its relentless efforts to create a "world balance of forces favorable to socialism" have become the only standard by which the regime measures its own progress; expansion of the territory under the control of the Red Army has become the only truth by which the "stratocracy" defines itself.

Clearly, Castoriadis's theoretical analyses, and particularly his assertion that the Communist party has ceded its leading role to a military "stratocracy," cannot win automatic agreement. The recent events in Poland, however, do lend added credence to the possibility of further military solutions to the problem of political power in the Communist world.

In France, *Devant la Guerre* has had an impact due less to its conclusions than to its clear warning about the growing military disequilibrium between East and West. Castoriadis, who shares with Raymond Aron neither a common intellectual tradition nor a compatible sense of what constitutes a free and desirable society, has nonetheless arrived at the same juncture. Both men view the build-up of Soviet military power around the periphery of Western Europe as a decisive factor in world politics and the preeminent danger facing France.

In today's France, theirs are not isolated voices; their fears are echoed by large sections of an increasingly anxious French intelligentsia. It can be hoped that these signs of a new realism in France will find a wider resonance in a Western Europe which many Americans feel is drifting toward moral and political neutralism.

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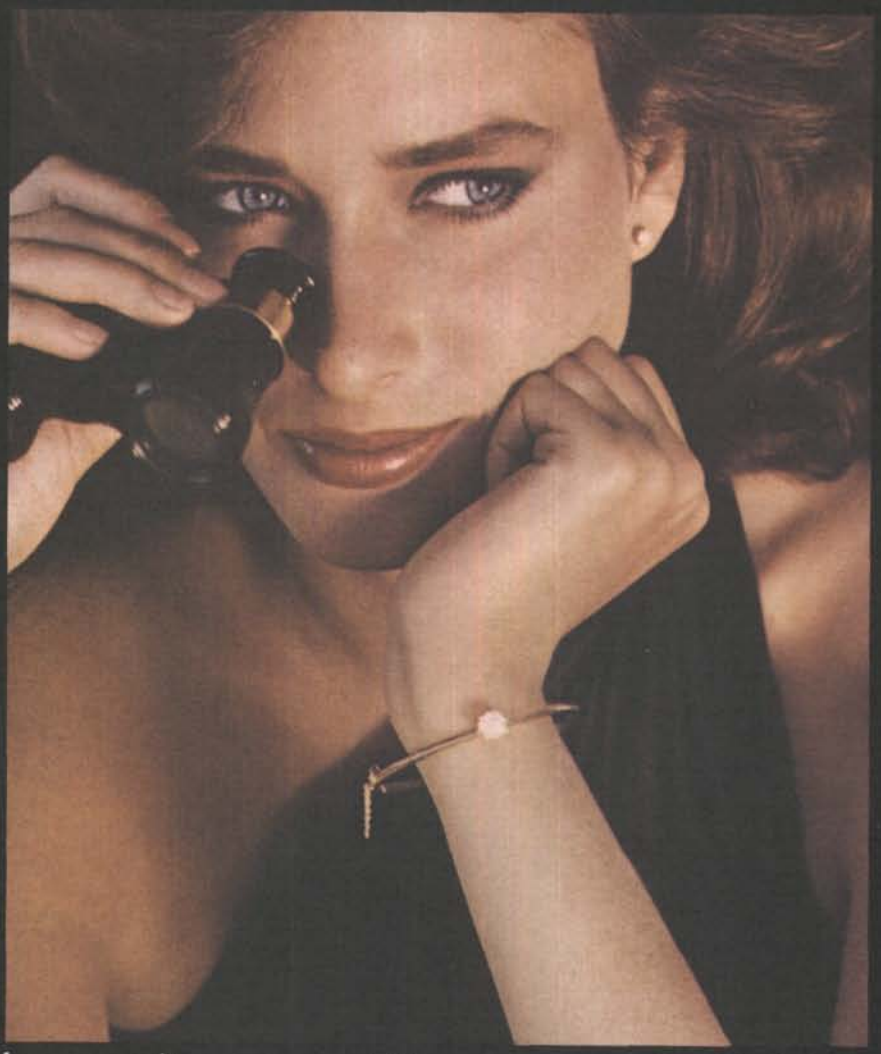

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